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Saint Palaye, Jean Baptiste

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF FROISSART.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS WORKS,

AND

A CRITICISM ON HIS HISTORY.

Tranſlated from the French of

M. DE LA CURNE DE ST. PALAYE,

By THOMAS JOHNES, ESQ. M. P.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

JOHN FROISSART, prieſt, canon, and treaſurer of the collegiate church of Chimay, Hiſtorian and Poet, was born in Valenciennes, a town in Haynault, about the year 1337. This date, which appears contradicted by one ſingle paſſage in his Chronicle, is confirmed by a number of others, as well in his Chronicle, as in his Manuſcript Poems.

However attentive he may have been to inform us of the minuteſt particulars of his life, he does not ſay one word rela-

tive to his family. One can only form a conjecture from a paſſage in his Poems, that his father's name was Thomas, and that he was a painter of arms.

We find in his Hiſtory a Froiſſart Meullier, a young knight from Haynault, who ſignalized himſelf by his valour at the ſiege of the caſtle of Fighieres in Spain, which the Engliſh and Gaſcons attacked in 1381. His country and name induce me to believe that our Hiſtorian might be a relation of his, and like him ſprung from a noble family.

Froiſſart is titled knight, at the beginning of a manuſcript in the abbey of St. Germain des prez; but as he has not this title in any other manuſcript, though we have ſome of the moſt ancient, and moſt authentick; it ſeems probable, that

the copyiſt has given it to him from his own authority.

His infancy announced what he would one day be; he early manifeſted that eager and inquiſitive mind, which during the courſe of his life never allowed him to remain long attached to the ſame occupations, and in the ſame place.

The different games ſuitable to that age, of which he gives us a picture equally curious and amuſing, kept up in his mind a fund of natural diſſipation, which during his early ſtudies tried the patience and exerciſed the ſeverity of his maſters.

He loved hunting, muſick, aſſemblies, feaſts, dancing, dreſs, good living, wine, and women: all theſe taſtes, which almoſt all ſhowed themſelves from twelve

years of age, being confirmed by habitude, were continued even to his old age, and perhaps never left him. The mind and heart of Froiſſart being not yet ſufficiently occupied, his love for hiſtory filled up that void, which his paſſion for pleaſure left; and became to him an inexhauſtible ſource of amuſement.

He had but juſt left ſchool, and was ſcarcely twenty years old, when at the intreaty of *his dear lord and maſter Sir Robert de Namur, knight, Lord of Beaufort,* he undertook to write the hiſtory of the wars of his own time, more particularly of thoſe which enſued after the battle of Poitiers. Four years afterwards, having gone to England, he preſented a part of this hiſtory to Queen Philippa of Haynault, the wife of Edward III. However

young

young he might then be, he had already travelled into the moſt diſtant provinces of France. The object of his viſit to England was to tear himſelf from the pains of an attachment which had tormented him for a long time. This paſſion took poſſeſſion of his heart from his infancy; it laſted ten years, and ſparks of it were again rekindled in a more advanced age, *in ſpite of his bald head and white hairs.*

When Poets ſing their loves, they are not always believed on their word; as Froiſſart only mentions his in poetry, one may treat all he ſays as pure fiction; but the portrait he draws is ſo natural, that one cannot prevent oneſelf from acknowledging the character of a young man in love, and the ſimple expreſſions of real paſſion.

He feigns, that when twelve years old Mercury appeared to him followed by the three Goddeſſes whoſe difference Paris had formerly decided; that this God, calling to mind the protection he had given him from four years of age, ordered him to reviſe the diſpute of theſe three divinities; that he had confirmed the judgement of Paris; and that Venus had promiſed him, as a recompence, a miſtreſs more beautiful than the fair Helen, and of ſuch high birth, that from thence to Conſtantinople there were not Earl, Duke, King, nor Emperor, who would not have eſteemed himſelf fortunate to obtain her. He was to ſerve this beauty for ten years, and his whole life was to be devoted to the adoration of that divinity who made him ſuch fair promiſes.

Froiſſart

Froiſſart had been early attached to Romances; that of Cleomades was the firſt inſtrument Love made uſe of to captivate him. He found it in the hands of a young maiden who was reading it, and who invited him to read it with her: he readily conſented, for ſuch complaiſances coſt little. There was ſoon formed between them a literary connexion. Froiſſart lent her the Romance of the *Baillou d'Amours**, and took the opportunity of ſending it to her, to ſlip into it a Ballad, in which he firſt ſpoke of his love. This ſpark of love became a flame which nothing could extinguiſh; and Froiſſart having experienced all that agitation

* M. de St. Palaye, in a note, ſays he is not acquainted with the Romance. Baillou ſignifies Baillif.

which a firſt paſſion inſpires, was almoſt reduced to deſpair on hearing that his miſtreſs was on the point of being married; his exceſſive grief overwhelmed him, and cauſed him a fit of illneſs which laſted for three months. At laſt he took the reſolution to travel, to diſſipate his chagrin, and to recover his health. As he travelled with a large company, he was forced to be attentive to himſelf, in order to hide his trouble. After two days journey, during which he had never ceaſed making verſes in honour of his miſtreſs, he arrived at a town, which I believe to be Calais, where he embarked. During his paſſage the weather was ſo tempeſtuous as to threaten an immediate wreck of the veſſel: this however was not capable of ſuſ-

pending

pending the application with which he was working to finiſh a Rondeau to the honour of his love. The weather became calm, and the Rondeau was completed; when he found himſelf on a coaſt, where, as he ſays, *they love war better than peace, and where ſtrangers are very well received.* He ſpeaks of England; the reception they gave him, the amuſements they procured him in the ſocieties of "Lords, Ladies, and Damſels," and the careſſes they loaded him with: but nothing was able to calm the melancholy which overwhelmed him; ſo that, not being able longer to ſupport the pangs of abſence, he reſolved to return nearer the lady of his heart.

A lady, Queen Philippa of Haynault, who detained him in England, learnt from

from a Virelay, which he preſented to her, the cauſe of his trouble; ſhe took compaſſion on him, by ordering him to go back to his own country, on condition however of his promiſe to return, and furniſhed him with money and horſes to perform the journey.

Love ſoon conducted him to the lady of his affections. Froiſſart let no opportunity ſlip of being in the ſame places where ſhe might be, and of converſing with her. We have before ſeen that ſhe was of ſuch high birth, that "Kings and Emperors might have ſought her;" theſe words taken literally are only ſuitable for a perſon of blood royal or to the iſſue of a ſovereign prince; but how can we connect the idea of ſuch high birth with the detail he gives us of the

the ſecret converſations, the amuſements, and aſſemblies, which he was at liberty to partake of by day or night? and, as if theſe traits were not ſufficient to make her known at the time he wrote, he ſeems to have wiſhed to have more clearly pointed her out by the name of Anne, in the enigmatical verſes which make part of his Manuſcript Poems. One may preſume that this love, ſo paſſionate and ſo tender, had the uſual fate of almoſt every paſſion.

Froiſſart ſpeaks in one of his Rondeaus of another Lady whom he had loved, and whoſe name, compoſed of five letters, was to be found in that of Polixena: this may be an Alix, which was formerly written Aelix. There is reaſon to believe he had a third flame called Margaret, and

and that it is her whom he indirectly celebrates in a poem * under the title, and in honour of the flower which bears her name †.

Perhaps he ſought in theſe epiſodical amours ſome remedy for a paſſion, which according to his own account was unfortunate. At leaſt we know that, in deſpair for the little ſucceſs which had attended all his aſſiduities and attentions to his firſt miſtreſs, he took the reſolution of again abſenting himſelf from her.

This abſence was longer than the pre-

* Dittie de la fleur de la Margherite, pages 70 and the following of his Manuſcript Poems.

† The Engliſh reader muſt be informed, that Marguerite is not only the name of a woman, but alſo of the flower called daiſey, and of a pearl.

ceding

ceding one; he returned to England, and attached himſelf to the ſervice of Queen Philippa. This Princeſs, ſiſter to the counteſs of Namur, wife of Robert, to whom Froiſſart ſeems to have been a ſervant, ſaw always with pleaſure her countrymen from Haynault; ſhe loved Letters; the College which ſhe founded, and which at this day is known at Oxford under the name of Queen's College, is an illuſtrious monument of the protection ſhe granted to them; Froiſſart therefore united all the titles which could merit the affection of Queen Philippa.

The hiſtory which he preſented to her, as I have before mentioned, whether at his firſt journey or the ſecond, (for it is not poſſible to decide which of

the

the two), was very well received, and probably gained him the title of Clerk (that is to ſay ſecretary or writer) of the chamber of this Princeſs, which he was in poſſeſſion of from 1361.

In the age of Froiſſart, all the world was perſuaded that Love was the motive of the moſt brilliant actions of courage and virtue. Knights made a parade of it in tournaments. Warriors expoſed themſelves to the moſt perilous combats, to maintain the honour and beauty of their ladies. It was then believed that Love might be confined to a delicate intercourſe of gallantry and tenderneſs: it is almoſt always under this form that we ſee it repreſented in the greater parts of thoſe efforts of the mind which have been handed down to us from that period;

period; the ladies bluſhed not in feeling ſo pure a paſſion, and the moſt modeſt made it the ordinary ſubject of their converſations.

The Queen of England frequently amuſed herſelf by making Froiſſart compoſe amorous ditties; but this occupation muſt be conſidered ſolely as a relaxation that no way impeded more ſerious works, ſince, during the five years he was attached to the ſervice of this Princeſs, he travelled at her expence to various parts of Europe, the object of which ſeems to be a reſearch after whatever might enrich his hiſtory. I draw this concluſion from a preface which is found at the head of the fourth volume in ſeveral manuſcripts of the Chronicle of Froiſſart; and, as it is not

to be found in the printed copies *, I thought the inſertion of it would not be improper here.

" At the requeſt, wiſh, and pleaſure, " of that moſt high and noble Prince, " my very dear lord and maſter Guy " de Chatillon, Count de Blois, Lord of " Aveſne, of Chimay, of Beaumont, of " Schonove, of Goude; I John Froiſ- " ſart, Prieſt, Chaplain to my very

* M. de St. Palaye is not quite correct; for the beginning of this preface is in the printed edition of Verard, and in another printed edition which I believe was not known to Denys Sauvage nor to M. de St. Palaye. It will be more particularly mentioned hereafter. This preface in my printed editions is not ſo long as this, and is ſomewhat different. It is not mentioned in the editions of Denys Sauvage.

dear

" dear Lord above named, and at this
" time treaſurer and canon of Chimay,
" and of Lille in Flanders, am again
" awakened, and entered into my work-
" ſhop, to labour and work at the grand
" and noble matters which, in former
" times, occupied my attention, which
" treat and examine the feats and
" events of the wars between France
" and England, and of all their allies
" and adherents, as it clearly appears
" from the treaties which have been
" made and completed until this very
" day of my again being awakened.

" Now, you that read, have read, or
" ſhall read this hiſtory, conſider in
" your own minds, how I could have
" known, and collected ſuch facts as I
" treat of, and of ſo many different

 " parties.

" parties. In truth, I muſt inform you
" that I began at the early age of twenty
" years, and came into the world at
" the time theſe events were paſſing,
" in the knowledge of which I have
" always taken greater pleaſure than in
" any thing elſe. God has been ſo
" gracious to me, that I was well with
" all parties, and of the houſehold of
" Kings; more eſpecially of King Ed-
" ward, and of the noble Queen his
" lady, Madame Philippa of Haynault,
" Queen of England, lady of Ireland
" and of Acquitaine, to whom in my
" youth I was Secretary, and amuſed
" her with handſome ditties and madri-
" gals of love; and through affection
" to the ſervice of that noble and pu-
" iſſant lady to whom I belonged, all the

" other

" other great Lords, Dukes, Earls,
" Barons, and Knights, of whatever
" nation they might be, loved me, ſaw
" me with pleaſure, and were of the
" greateſt utility to me. Thus, under
" the protection of this good lady, and
" at her coſts, as well as at the expences
" of great Lords, I have ſearched in
" my time the greater part of Chriſten-
" dom (in truth who ſeeks will find);
" and wherever I came, I made inquiry
" after thoſe ancient Knights and Squires
" who had been preſent at theſe deeds
" of arms, and who were well enabled
" to ſpeak of them. I ſought alſo for
" heralds of good repute, to verify and
" confirm what I might have heard
" elſewhere of theſe matters. In this
" manner have I collected the mate-

" rials for this noble hiſtory; and that
" gallant Count de Blois before men-
" tioned, has taken great pains in it.
" And as long as through God's grace
" I ſhall live, I ſhall continue it, for
" the more I work at it, the greater
" pleaſure I receive; like the gallant
" Knight or Squire enamoured with
" arms, by perſeverance and attention
" he perfects and accompliſhes himſelf,
" thus by labouring and working on
" this ſubject, I acquire greater ability
" and delight."

Of all the particulars of Froiſſart's life during his reſidence in England, we only know that he was preſent at the ſeparation of the King and Queen in 1361, with their ſon the Prince of Wales and the Princeſs his lady, who were going to take

take poſſeſſion of the government of Acquitaine; and that he was between Eltham and Weſtminſter in the year 1363, when King John paſſed on his return to England.

There is in his Poems a paſtoral, which ſeems to allude only to that event. With regard to his travels during the time he was attached to the ſervice of the Queen, he employed ſix months in Scotland, and penetrated as far as the Highlands. He travelled on horſeback with his portmanteau behind him, and followed by a greyhound.

The King of Scotland, and many Lords whoſe names he has preſerved to us, treated him ſo handſomely, that he could have wiſhed to have returned thither. William Earl of Douglas lodged

him during fifteen days in his caſtle of Dalkeith, five miles from Edinburgh. We are ignorant of the date of this journey; and of another, which he made into North Wales, that I believe muſt have been about the ſame time.

He was in France, at Melun ſur Seine, about the 20th of April 1366; perhaps private reaſons might have led him to take that road to Bordeaux, where he was on All Saints day of that year, when the Princeſs of Wales was brought to bed of a ſon, who was afterwards Richard II. The Prince of Wales ſetting out a few days afterwards for the war in Spain, Froiſſart accompanied him to Dax, where the Prince reſided ſome time. He had expected to have attended him during the continuance of this

this grand expedition; but the Prince would not permit him to go farther, and ſhortly after his arrival ſent him back to the Queen his mother.

Froiſſart could not have made any long ſtay in England, ſince in the following year he was at different Italian Courts. It was this ſame year, that is to ſay 1368, that Lionel Duke of Clarence, ſon of the King of England, eſpouſed Joland, daughter of Galeas the ſecond, Duke of Milan. The marriage was celebrated the 25th of April; and Lionel died the 17th of October following. Froiſſart, who probably was in his ſuite, was preſent at the magnificent reception which Amadeus Count de Savoye, ſurnamed the Count Verd, gave him on his return: he deſcribes the

feaſts on this occaſion, which laſted three days; and he does not forget to tell us that they danced a virelay of his compoſition.

From the Court of Savoy he returned to Milan, where the ſame Count Amadeus gave him a good Cottehardie*, with twenty florins of gold; from thence to Bologna and Ferrara, where he received forty ducats from the King of Cyprus; and then to Rome.

* Or, as it is more often written, *Cotardie*, a ſort of coat, a dreſs common to men and women; here it means a Pourpoint. This was one of the liberalities which great Lords were accuſtomed to make; they put money, as one ſees by this example, into the purſe, which, according to the uſage of that time, was attached to the coat.

St. Palaye.

Inſtead

Inſtead of the modeſt equipage we have ſeen him travel into Scotland with, he was now like a man of importance, travelling on a handſome horſe attended by a hackney.

It was about this period that Froiſſart experienced a loſs which nothing could recompence: Philippa of Haynault Queen of England, who had heaped wealth on him, died in 1369. He compoſed a lay on this melancholy event, of which however he was not a witneſs; for he ſays, in another place, that in 1395 it was 27 years ſince he had ſeen England. According to ſeveral authors *, he wrote

* Voſſius de Hiſtoricis Latinis, lib. 3. cap. 4. Bullart, Académie des Sciences, tom. I. p. 124.

the

the life of Queen Philippa; but this aſſertion is not founded on any proofs.

Independently of the employment of Clerk of the Chamber to the Queen of England, which Froiſſart had had, he had alſo been of the houſehold of Edward III. and even of that of John King of France. As there are ſeveral other Princes and Lords of whoſe houſeholds he had been, or whom he calls his Lords and maſters, it is proper to obſerve, that by this mode of ſpeech he means not only thoſe Princes and Lords to whom he had been attached as a ſervant; but likewiſe all thoſe who had made him preſents, or gratifications; or who, having received him in their Courts or Caſtles, had admitted him to their tables.

Froiſſart,

Froiſſart, having loſt his patroneſs Queen Philippa, did not return to England, but went into his own country, where he obtained the living of Leſtines. Of all that he performed during the time he exerciſed this miniſtry, he tells us nothing more than that the Tavern-keepers of Leſtines had five hundred francs of his money in the ſhort ſpace of time he was their rector. One reads in a manuſcript Journal of the Biſhop of Chartres, Chancellor to the Duke of Anjou, that, according to letters ſealed on the 12th December 1381, this Prince cauſed to be ſiezed fifty-ſix quires of the Chronicle of Froiſſart, rector of the pariſh church of Leſtines, which the hiſtorian had ſent to be illuminated, and then

then to be forwarded to the King of England, the enemy of France.

Froiſſart attached himſelf afterwards to Winceſlaus de Luxembourg Duke of Brabant, perhaps in quality of Secretary, according to the cuſtom of Princes and Lords in thoſe days, who employed clerks to manage their affairs, and in their correſpondence, and who amuſed them by their knowledge, or their wit.

Winceſlaus had a taſte for Poetry: he had had made by Froiſſart a collection of his ſongs, his rondeaus and virelays, who, adding ſome of his own pieces to thoſe of the Prince, formed a ſort of romance, under the title of Meliador, or the Knight of the Sun; but the Duke did not live ſufficiently long to ſee the completion of the work, for he died 1384.

Almoſt

Almoſt immediately after this event, Froiſſart found another patron: he was made clerk of the chapel to Guy Count de Blois; and he was not long in teſtifying his gratitude to his new patron, by a Paſtoral on the betrothing of Louis Count de Dunois, ſon of Guy, with Mary daughter of the Duke of Berry. Two years after, on the ſolemnization of this marriage at Bourges, he celebrated it in a ſort of Epithalamium, ſufficiently ingenious for thoſe times, intituled "The Temple of Honour."

He paſſed the years 1385, 1386, and 1387, ſometimes in the Blaiſois, ſometimes in Touraine; but the Count de Blois having engaged him to continue the courſe of his hiſtory, which he had left unfiniſhed, he determined in 1388

to

to take advantage of the peace which was juſt concluded, to viſit the Court of Gaſton Phœbus Count de Foix and de Béarn, in order to gain full information in whatever related to foreign countries, and the more diſtant provinces of the kingdom, where he knew that a great number of warriors ſignalized themſelves daily by the moſt gallant actions.

His age and his health ſtill allowed him to bear great fatigue; his memory was ſufficiently ſtrong, to retain whatever he ſhould hear; and his judgment clear enough, to point out to him the uſe he ſhould make of it

He ſet out with letters of recommendation from the Count de Blois, to Gaſton Phœbus, and took the road through Avignon. One of his paſtorals informs

us,

us, that he reſided in the environs of an abbey*, ſituated between Lunel and Montpelier, and that he gained the affections of a young perſon, who bewailed his departure: in the ſame poem he tells us, that he carried with him four greyhounds†, as a preſent to the Count de Foix. Gaſton was paſſionately fond of dogs, and had upwards of ſixteen hundred always with him: there exiſts a treatiſe written by him on hunting, which is preſerved in manuſcript in ſeveral libraries, and which was printed in 1520.

* Probably St. Geniez, a monaſtery of nuns, one league and a half from the road which leads from Montpelier to Lunel. ST. PALAYE.

† Their names were Triſtan, Hector, Brun, and Rollant. ST. PALAYE.

Froiſſart

Froiſſart went from Carcaſſonne to Pamiers, of which he gives an agreable deſcription; he remained there for three days waiting for the chance of meeting ſome perſon with whom he might travel into Béarn. He was fortunate enough to meet with a knight from the country of Foix, who was returning thither from Avignon, and they journeyed together.

Sir Eſpaing du Lyon, the name of the knight, was a man of high diſtinction; he had had conſiderable commands, and was employed all his life in negociations as delicate as they were important. The two travellers agreed perfectly well together; the knight, who had ſerved in all the wars in Gaſcony, was equally deſirous to learn every thing which related to thoſe that Froiſſart was acquainted

quainted with; and Froiſſart, more in a ſituation to ſatisfy him than any one, was not leſs curious to be informed of thoſe events in which the knight had borne a part: they mutually communicated all they knew, with a reciprocal complaiſance. They rode ſide by ſide, and frequently only a foot's pace: their whole journey was paſſed in converſations; by which they mutually inſtructed each other.

Towns, caſtles, ruins, plains, heights, valleys, defiles; every thing awakened the curioſity of Froiſſart, and recalled to the memory of the Lord Eſpaing du Lyon the different actions which had there paſſed under his eyes, or which he had heard related by thoſe who had been engaged in them.

The hiſtorian, too exact in the recital which he gives us of theſe converſations, relates even the exclamations by which he teſtified his gratitude to the knight, for all the intereſting intelligence he was ſo good to give him.

If they arrived at a town before ſunſet, they profited of the remnant of day to examine the outworks of the place, or to obſerve thoſe parts of it which had ſuffered from aſſaults. On their return to the inn, they continued the ſame converſations, either between themſelves or with other knights and eſquires, who might be lodged there; and Froiſſart never went to bed until he had put in writing every particular he had heard.

After a journey of ſix days, they arrived at Ortez. This town, one of the moſt

moſt conſiderable in Béarn, was the ordinary reſidence of Gaſton Count de Foix and Viſcount de Béarn, ſurnamed Phœbus, on account of his beauty. Froiſſart could not have choſen a Court more ſuitable to his views. The Count de Foix, at the age of fifty-nine years, was the moſt vigorous, the handſomeſt, and beſt-made man of that period. Adroit at all exerciſes, valorous, an accompliſhed Captain, noble and magnificent, he never ſuffered any warrior who waited on him to depart without carrying with him proofs of his liberality: his caſtle was the rendezvous of all thoſe brave Captains who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves in combats, or in tournaments. Their converſations ſolely ran on attacks of places, ſurprizes, ſieges,

aſſaults, ſkirmiſhes, and battles. Their amuſements were games of addreſs and force; tilts, tournaments, and huntings, more laborious and almoſt as dangerous as war itſelf. Theſe details deſerve to be read in Froiſſart: I can only imperfectly trace what he has ſo excellently painted.

The Count de Foix having learnt from Sir Eſpaing du Lyon the arrival of Froiſſart, who was well known at the Court of Ortez by the two firſt volumes of his Chronicle, ſent to ſeek for him at the houſe of one of his eſquires, who had received and lodged him; and, ſeeing him at a diſtance, ſaid to him ſmiling, and in good French, "that "he was perfectly well acquainted with "him, although he had never before "ſeen him; but that he had heard

"much

" much talk about him, and he retained " him in his houſhold."

This expreſſion, as I have before ſaid, does not mean that Froiſſart was lodged in the caſtle, but only that his expences were defrayed by the Count during the winter he paſſed at his Court. His moſt uſual occupation, in that time, was to amuſe Gaſton, after his ſupper, by reading to him the romance of Meliador, which he had brought with him. Every evening he repaired to the caſtle at midnight, which was the hour the Count ſat down to table, and none dared to interrupt the reading. Gaſton himſelf, who liſtened with the greateſt attention, only ſpoke to aſk queſtions concerning the book; and he never ſent him away, before he had made him drink all the

wine which had remained on the table, from his own bottle.

Sometimes this Prince took pleaſure to inform him of thoſe particulars of the wars in which he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf. Froiſſart did not gain leſs information from his frequent converſations with thoſe knights and eſquires whom he found aſſembled at Ortez; more eſpecially from the knights of Arragon and of England, attached to the houſhold of the Duke of Lancaſter, who at that time reſided at Bourdeaux. They related to him all they knew of the battles of the Kings John of Caſtile, and Denys of Portugal, and their allies. Among others, the famous Baſtot de Maulion, in giving him the hiſtory of his own life, told him alſo that of almoſt

moſt all the wars which had happened in the different provinces of France, and even in Spain, from the time of the battle of Poitiers, at which period he firſt bore arms.

Although he applied himſelf, without relaxation, in collecting hiſtorical memoirs, Froiſſart gave, however, ſome moments to Poeſy. We have a paſtoral, by him, which he ſeems to have compoſed in the county of Foix, in honour of Gaſton Phœbus. He ſays, that being

En beau Pré ſert et plaiſant
Par deſſus Gave la riviere
Entre Pau et Ortais ſeant,

he ſaw ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes, who were converſing of different Lords,

and the arms they bore. He adroitly makes uſe of this fiction, to name with praiſe all thoſe from whom he had received any marks of liberality, and terminates his liſt with the Count de Foix.

After a tolerable long reſidence at the Court of Ortez, Froiſſart began to think of his departure. He was detained by Gaſton, who gave him hopes that an opportunity would ſoon offer for him to travel in good company. The marriage of the Counteſs of Boulogne, a relation of the Count, having been concluded with the Duke de Berry, the young bride was conducted from Ortez to Morlas, where the equipages of the Duke, her huſband, were waiting for her. He ſet out in her ſuite, after having received proofs of the generoſity

of

of Gaſton, who warmly preſſed him to return to him. He accompanied the Princeſs to Avignon, and the remainder of the road which ſhe took acroſs the Lyonnois, la Breſſe, le Forès, and the Bourbonnois, as far as Riom, in Auvergne.

The ſtay at Avignon was unfortunate to Froiſſart; they robbed him. This melancholy adventure was the ſubject of a long poem, in which he introduces ſeveral incidents of his life, and which I have made uſe of in this memoir.

One ſees, by this piece, that the deſire of viſiting the tomb of the Cardinal de Luxembourg, who died in odour of ſanctity, was not the ſole motive which had induced him to re-paſs through Avig-

Avignon in the ſuite of the young Princeſs; but that he was charged with a private commiſſion from the Lord de Couci. He might, as he ſays, have endeavoured to ſeek for redreſs for the loſs of his money by ſoliciting a Benefice; but this reſource was not to his taſte. He laid greater ſtreſs on the generoſity of the Lord de la Riviere, and the Count de Sancerre, who accompanied the Ducheſs de Berry, and on that of the Viſcount d'Aſci. He paints himſelf, in this poem, as a man of much expence: beſides the revenue of the living of Leſtines, which was conſiderable, he had received, ſince he was twenty-five years old, two thouſand francs, of which nothing remained. The compoſition of his works had coſt him

him ſeven hundred francs; but he regretted not this expence; for, as he ſays, "I have compoſed many a hiſtory "which will be ſpoken of by poſterity." The remainder was ſpent among the tavern-keepers at Leſtines, and in his travels, which he always performed with a good equipage, well mounted, well dreſſed, and living well wherever he went.

Froiſſart had been preſent at all the feaſts which were given on the marriage of the Duke of Berry; celebrated the eve of Whitſunday at Riom, in Auvergne. He compoſed a paſtoral for the morrow of the nuptials; then, returning to France with the Lord de la Riviere, he went to Paris. His natural activity, and his ardour for information, with

with which he was inceſſantly occupied, did not permit him to remain there long. We have ſeen him in ſix months go from the Blaiſois to Avignon; then to the county of Foix; from whence he returned again to Avignon, and croſs Auvergne to go to Paris. One ſees him in leſs than two years ſucceſſively in the Cambreſis, in Haynault, Holland, Picardy, a ſecond time in Paris, at the extremity of Languedoc; then again at Paris and at Valenciennes; from thence to Bruges, Sluys, in Zealand, and at laſt in his own country.

He accompanied into the Cambreſis the Lord de Coucy to the caſtle of Crevecœur, which the King had juſt given to him. He relates to him all he had ſeen, and learns from him the dif-

ferent

ferent particulars of the negociations between France and England.

After having ſtaid fifteen days in his own country, he paſſed a month in Holland with the Count de Blois, entertaining him with the hiſtory of his travels. He then goes to Lelinghen, to learn the details of the negociations for peace, which were carrying on at that place. He is preſent at the magnificent entry which Iſabella de Baviere makes into Paris. The exactneſs with which he deſcribes the ceremonies obſerved between the Pope and Charles VI. at Avignon, ſeems to prove he was an eye-witneſs of their meeting: this is the more probable, becauſe it is certain that Charles VI. went from Avignon to Toulouſe, to receive the homage of the Count

Count de Foix; when Froiſſart was preſent, and heard their converſation.

Nothing of novelty paſſed, as one ſees, but Froiſſart wiſhed to be a ſpectator of; feaſts, tournaments, conferences for peace, interviews of princes, their entries, nothing eſcaped his curioſity. It appears, that, at the beginning of the year 1390, he returned to his own country, and that he was ſolely occupied in the continuation of his hiſtory, and in completing it, from the intelligence he had amaſſed from all parts with ſo much labour and fatigue. However, what he had learnt relative to the war in Spain did not ſatisfy him; he felt a ſcruple at only having heard one ſide; that is to ſay, the Gaſcons and Spaniards, who had been attached to the

King

King of Caſtille. It was the duty of an exact and judicious hiſtorian to know alſo what the Portugueſe had to ſay on this ſubject: and, on the information he had, that numbers of that nation were to be found at Bruges, he went thither.

Fortune ſerved him beyond his hopes; and the enthuſiaſm with which he ſpeaks of it, paints the ardour with which he was deſirous of a perfect knowledge of facts. On his arrival, he learnt that a Portugueze knight, "a valiant and wiſe "man, and of the Council of the King "of Portugal," whoſe name was Juan Fernando Portelet, had lately come to Middleburgh, in Zealand.

Portelet, who was on his road to Pruſſia to join in the war againſt the in-

infidels, had been preſent in all the wars of Portugal. Froiſſart immediately ſets out, in company with a Portugueze, a friend of the knight; goes to Sluys, embarks, and arrives at Middleburgh, where his fellow-traveller preſents him to Portelet.

This knight, "gracious, amiable, "and eaſy of acceſs," relates to him, during the ſix days they paſſed together, every thing that had been done in Portugal and Spain, from the death of King Ferdinand until his departure from Portugal. Froiſſart, equally pleaſed with the recitals of Portelet, as with his politeneſs, took leave of him, and returned home; where, having arranged all the information he had acquired in his various travels, he compoſed a new

book,

book, which makes the third of his hiſtory.

The paſſage from whence theſe particulars are taken adds, that Froiſſart, on quitting Zealand, and before his return to his own country, went once more to Rome. Although, in this inſtance, the printed copies are conformable to the manuſcripts, this journey, of which no other mention is made, ſeems to me quite improbable. Denys Sauvage aſſures us, in a marginal note, that, inſtead of Rome, one ſhould read Bruges, Sluys, or Valenciennes: it is much more natural to read Damme, a port in the neighbourhood of Sluys, where one has ſeen that the Hiſtorian embarked.

One cannot ſay how long Froiſſart remained in Haynault; one only knows that he was again in Paris 1392, at the time when the Conſtable de Cliſſon was aſſaſſinated by Peter de Craon; and at Abbeville towards the end of that ſame year, or the beginning of the next, during the conferences which were held there by the Plenipotentiaries from France and England, when they at laſt eſtabliſhed a truce for four years.

From the year 1378, Froiſſart had obtained from Pope Clement VII. the reverſion of a canonſhip at Lille. One ſees, in the collection of his Poetry, which was completed in 1393, and in a Preface, which is to be met with in ſeveral manuſcripts at the beginning of the

the fourth volume of his Hiſtory, compoſed about this time, that he titled himſelf Canon of Lille; but Clement VII. dying in 1394, he gave up his expectations of the reverſion, and began to qualify himſelf Canon and Treaſurer of the Collegial Church of Chimay, which he probably owed to the friendſhip of the Count de Blois, who reſpected him much; the Lordſhip of Chimay being part of the inheritance which the Count had had fallen-in to him in 1381, by the death of John de Chantillon, Count de Blois, the laſt of his brothers.

It was twenty-ſeven years ſince Froiſſart had left England; when, taking advantage of the truce between the French

and Engliſh, he returned thither in 1395, furniſhed with letters of recommendation to the King, and his uncles. From Dover, where he diſembarked, he went to Canterbury, made his offering at the ſhrine of Thomas à Becket, and, from reſpect to the memory of the Prince of Wales, to whom he was perfectly well known, he viſited his magnificent mauſoleum. He ſaw there the young King Richard, who had arrived to return thanks to God for the ſucceſs of his laſt campaign in Ireland: but, in ſpite of the good intentions of the Lord Percy, High Steward of England, who had promiſed to procure him an audience of the King, he could not be preſented; and was obliged to follow this Prince to the dif-

different places he viſited, until he came to Leeds-caſtle *.

This time was not loſt on our Hiſtorian; the Engliſh were ſtill full of their expedition to Ireland; and he got them to tell him both their own exploits, and the marvellous things they had ſeen there. Being yet at Leeds-caſtle, he preſented to the Duke of York his letters from the Count d'Hainault and the Count d'Oſtrevant †. "Maſter John," ſaid the Duke to him, "keep near to our per-"ſon, and to my people; we will ſhew "you all love and kindneſs; we are "bounden ſo to do, from affection to

* In Kent.

† Afterwards Earl of Holland, and Knight of the Garter.

" former times, and to our Lady Mo-
" ther, to whom you were attached;
" we well remember thoſe times." He afterwards introduced him into the King's chamber, who received him with very diſtinguiſhed marks of good-will. Richard took the letters he had been charged with; and, having read them, ſaid, "that " ſince he had been of the houſehold of " his grandfather, and of the Queen his " grandmother, he muſt be ſtill of the " houſehold of England."

Froiſſart, however, had not yet been able to preſent to the King the romance of Meliador, which he had brought with him; and Percy adviſed him to wait a more favourable opportunity. Two important objects occupied the mind of Richard; one was his intended

tended marriage with Iſabella of France; the other, the oppoſition of the people of Aquitaine to the donation which he had made of this province to his uncle, the Duke of York. The prelates and barons had been ſummoned to Eltham, to deliberate on theſe two affairs; and Froiſſart had followed the Court. He wrote down regularly all the news of the day, which he heard in his converſations with the different Engliſh Lords; and Richard de Servy *, who was of the King's Cabinet Council, entruſted him, in confidence, with every reſolution they had determined upon, begging him only to keep them ſecret until they ſhould be publicly divulged.

* Q. Was it Richard de Surry, Lord Surry?

At laſt, on the Sunday which followed the holding of this Council, the Duke of York, Richard de Surry, and Thomas de Percy, finding the King but little occupied, mentioned to him the romance which Froiſſart had brought with him. The Prince aſked to ſee it; and the Hiſtorian ſays, "he ſaw it in "his chamber; for, I had it always "with me, and placed it upon his bed. "He then opened and looked into it, "and was greatly pleaſed: indeed, he "ought to have been pleaſed; for it "was illuminated, and the writing much "ornamented: it was, beſides, bound "in crimſon velvet, with ten ſilver-gilt "nails, with a golden roſe, in the midſt "of two claſps gilt, richly worked with "gold roſe-trees. Then," continues Froiſſart,

Froiſſart, " the King enquired what ſub-
" ject it treated of; and I told him, of
" love. He was delighted with this an-
" ſwer, and looked into different parts
" of the book, and read therein; for,
" he read and ſpoke French perfectly
" well. He then ordered one of his
" knights, named Sir Richard Credon,
" to carry it to his cabinet; and he
" ſeemed much obliged to me for it."

Henry Caſtede, an Engliſh eſquire, who had been preſent at this converſation, and who knew beſides that Froiſſart was writing his hiſtory, coming up to him, enquired if he had been informed of the details of the conqueſt which the King had juſt made in Ireland. Froiſſart pretended to be ignorant of them, in order to engage the eſquire

quire in converſation, who took pleaſure in recounting them to him.

Every thing the Hiſtorian heard, among the reſt, the repaſt which the King of England gave in Ireland to the four Kings, after having conquered them, excited in him very great regret, for not having come to England a year ſooner, as he was preparing to do, when the news of the death of Queen Anne of Luxembourg, Richard's firſt wife, made him alter his intentions: he would not have failed to have gone to Ireland, to have ſeen every thing himſelf; for, he was much intereſted in collecting the minuteſt circumſtances of this expedition, in order to entertain "his Lords" the Duke of Bavaria and his ſon, who had on Frizeland ſimilar pretenſions

to

to thoſe of the King of England on Ireland.

After three months reſidence in England, Froiſſart took his leave of the King. This Prince, whom he had followed in his different excurſions near London, ordered him to be given, as a laſt mark of his affection, 100 nobles * in a goblet † of ſilver, gilt, weighing two marcs.

The melancholy end of Richard, which happened in 1399, is related at the end of the fourth volume of Froiſſart's hiſtory, who acquits himſelf moſt

* This ſum may amount to about 25 guineas of our preſent coin. ST. PALAYE.

† This was called by our anceſtors a Henepée, id eſt, hanap, full of money: from whence comes the Hanaper office in the Engliſh Treaſury. ST. PALAYE.

grate-

gratefully to this Prince by the affecting manner with which he laments his misfortunes. At the ſame time he remarks, that in this event he ſaw the accompliſhment of a prediction which had been made on Richard, when he was born at Bordeaux; and alſo of a prophecy in the romance of Brutus *, which pointed out the Prince who would dethrone him.

The death of Guy Count de Blois happened ſoon after Froiſſart's return home: he mentions it in his Chronicle, under the year 1397. He was then ſixty years of age, and muſt have lived at leaſt four years more; for, he relates ſome events of the year 1400. If one was to

* See particulars of Wace, author of the romance of Brutus, in Mr. Ellis's Specimen of early Engliſh Poets.

believe

believe Bodin and La Popliniere, he would have lived to 1420; but theſe two writers have probably been deceived by theſe words, which begin the laſt chapter of his hiſtory: "En l'an de "grace mil quatre cent ung moins;" inſtead of reading, "ung," as it is written in ſeveral manuſcripts; and in the black letter editions they muſt have read "vingt."

Another paſſage in Froiſſart may alſo have given riſe to a belief that he lived to about the middle of the fifteenth century. In ſpeaking of the baniſhment of the Count de Harcourt, who perſuaded the Engliſh to make a deſcent in Normandy, he ſays, that the melancholy effects of this invaſion were viſible for more than a hundred years after. Theſe terms muſt not be taken literally; the

author

author wrote rather as foreſeeing thoſe evils to come which he dreaded, than as being a witneſs of theſe fatal effects.

It is not, however, poſſible to decide in what year he died; it only appears that it was in the month of October, ſince his "obit" is indicated in that month in the Obituary of the Collegial Church of St. Monegunda, at Chimay, from which I have added an extract at the end of this Memoir. According to an old tradition of the country, he was interred in the chapel of St. Anne, in this Collegial Church; and, indeed, it ſeems very probable that he ſhould end his day in his own Chapter.

The name of Froiſſart was common to ſeveral perſons who lived at the ſame time with our Hiſtorian; beſides the Froiſſart Meullier, the young eſquire from

From Haynault, whom I mentioned in the beginning of this Memoir, one finds, in the Chronicle of our author, a Dom Froiſſart, who had ſignalized himſelf at the ſiege which the Count de Haynault had formed in 1340 againſt the town of St. Amand. This monk defended for a conſiderable time a breach which had been made in the walls of the abbey, and did not abandon it, before he had killed or wounded eighteen men. One reads, at the end of ſome charters of the Count de Foix, a ſignature of J. Froiſſart, or Jaquinot Froiſſart: he was a Secretary to the Count, and, perhaps, a relation of the Hiſtorian. There is alſo mention made, in the regiſters of the "Treſor des Chartes," of a remiſſion granted in 1375 to Philebert Froiſſart, eſquire,

eſquire, who had been in the company of Gaſcons in the country of Guyenne, under the command of Charles d'Artois, Count de Pezenas.

To avoid interrupting the thread of the narrative, I have deferred to the end of this Memoir the examination of a paſſage in the poetry of Froiſſart, which points out, but in obſcure terms, one of the principal circumſtances of his life. He recals the faults of his youth, and particularly reproaches himſelf for having quitted a learned profeſſion for which he had natural talents, and which had gained him much reſpect (he ſeems to point at Hiſtory, or Poetry), to follow another, which, though much more lucrative, was as little ſuitable to him as that of arms; and, having failed in

it,

it, had made him fall from that degree of honour to which the firſt had elevated him. He ſays, he is determined to repair his fault, and, returning to his former occupations, tranſmit to poſterity the glorious names of thoſe Kings, Princes, and Lords, whoſe generoſity he had partaken of.

In the whole courſe of the life of Froiſſart, I ſee no period in which this pretended change can be placed, nor that can point out this lucrative trade, and which he himſelf calls "*marchandiſe.*" The indecency of the expreſſion will not ſuffer us to ſuppoſe it could be his cure of Leſtines; although he has ſaid, in another part, that the rectory was of conſiderable value: could it be the profeſſion of lawyer, or that of

his father, who was, as we have before ſtated, a painter of arms? A ſingular meaning of the word "marchandiſe," in Commines, may perhaps give us a plauſible explanation.

Commines, born in the ſame country, and not very far from the time of Froiſſart, employs this word to ſignify a negociation of affairs between Princes. The buſineſs of a negociator, or rather a man of intrigue, who ſeeks, without any apparent character, to penetrate the ſecret of Courts, would perhaps be that, which Froiſſart repents to have followed. The details in which we have entered reſpecting his various travels, the long reſidence which he has often made, in critical times, with ſeveral Princes, and the talents which he

had

had to inſinuate himſelf into their good graces, ſeem to me to warrant this conjecture.

Extract from a manuſcript taken from the archives of the Chapter of St. Monegunda, at Chimay, in which are found the obits and pious foundations made to this Chapter, and other antiquities. Folio 39 and 40.

"The obit of Sir John Froiſſard, "born at Valenciennes, Canon and "Treaſury of the aforeſaid Church, "which flouriſhed in 1364, may have "place here, according to his quality, "as having been domeſtick Chaplain "to the renowned Guy de Chatillon, "Count de Soiſſon and de Blois, Lord

" of Aveſnes, Chimay, and Beaumont,
" &c. who has alſo been a very cele-
" brated Hiſtoriographer of his time,
" and has written the wars and chroni-
" cles, and the moſt remarkable events
" from the year 1335 until the year
" 1400; according, as he himſelf re-
" lates, in divers parts of his hiſtory;
" and more eſpecially in the 51ſt chap-
" ter of his 4th book, and as it is ſhewn
" in the eulogium written in his praiſe
" in the following words:

" Cognita Romanæ vix eſſet gloria gentis,
" Pluribus hunc ſcriptis ni decoraſſet honos.
" Tanti nempe refert totum ſcripſiſſe per orbem,
" Quælibet et doctos ſæc'la tuliſſe viros.
" Commemorent alios alii, ſuper æthera tollam
" Froiſſardum, hiſtoriæ per ſua ſæc'la ducem;
" Scripſit

" Scripſit enim hiſtoriam magn ſexaginta per
" annos,
" Totius mundi, quæ memoranda notat,
" Scripſit & Anglorum Reginæ geſta Philippæ,
" Qui, Guilielme, tuo tutia juncta toro."

HONORARIUM.

Gallorum ſublimis honos & fama tuorum,
Hic, Froiſſarde, jaces, ſi modo forte jaces.
Hiſtoriæ vivus ſtuduiſti reddere vitam,
Defuncto vitam reddet at illa tibi.

JOANNES FROISSARDUS, Canonicus & Theſaurarius Eccleſiæ Collegiatæ Sanctæ Monegundis Simaci, vetuſtiſſimo ferme totius Belgii oppido.

Proxima dum propriis florebit Francia ſcriptis,
Fania * dum ramos, Blancaque † fundit aquas,

* The Faigne de Chimay, a ſmall foreſt dependant on it.

† La Blanche Eau, a river which runs by Chimay.

Urbis ut hujus honos, templi fic fama vigebit.
Teque ducem hiſtoriæ Gallia tota colet,
Belgica tota colet, Cymeaque vallis amabit
Dum rapidus proprios Scaldis obibit agros.

AN

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

WORKS OF FROISSART.

Tranſlated from the French of

M. DE LA CURNE DE ST. PALAYE,

BY

THOMAS JOHNES.

Heads of the Matters contained in this Eſſay.

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VI. The enquiries which Froiſſart made to form this Hiſtory, and the pains he took.

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VIII. The

VIII. The chronology of Froiſſart.

IX. Of the firſt thirty years which Froiſſart ſpeaks of at the commencement of his Hiſtory after John le Bel; that is to ſay, from 1326 to 1356.

THE

THE life of Froiſſart has been the ſubject of the preceding pages. I will, now give you the hiſtory of his works, as well printed as manuſcript, in verſe and in proſe; and I will, as faithfully as I am able, detail their contents. It may, perhaps, be thought I have puſhed theſe details too far; but, I feel I owe a particular attention to an Hiſtorian who alone is worth a number of others, by the importance of the ſubjects he treats of, and from the length of time his hiſtory continues. I have beſides obſerved that the author has expanded, in the courſe of his work, many facts which ſerve to clear up many preceding facts;

they ſhould render him, as much as may be poſſible, more eaſy, more intereſting, and more inſtructive.

I.

General Plan of his Hiſtory.

THE Hiſtory which Froiſſart has left us extends from 1326 until 1400. It is not confined to the events which were paſſing in France during this long period; it comprehends, with almoſt as much detail, every conſiderable affair which happened in England, Scotland, and

and Ireland, and in Flanders. It includes alſo an infinite number of particulars relative to the affairs of the Popes of Rome and of Avignon; of Spain, Germany, Italy; ſometimes even of Ruſſia, Hungary, Turkey, Africa, and other places beyond ſea; in ſhort, of almoſt the whole known world. But this immenſe multitude of facts, ſo different from each other; whoſe chronological order is not very clearly made out, frequently preſents to the reader but a confuſed mixture of events, paſſed at different times, and in different places, of which he cannot form any diſtinct idea, and whoſe memory cannot unite ſo many ſcattered objects, which have a neceſſary connection between each other.

There

There will be found, at the end of this Eſſay, an abridgement of the principal facts related in the courſe of this hiſtory *; and, in order to remedy, at leaſt in part, the diſorder which reigns in placing theſe events, I will diſpoſe of them each in the claſs to which they belong, in pointing out the chapters which it will be proper to read, to follow the train of cauſes of a ſimilar nature, as well as the hiſtory of the ſame country, or ſame nation. It will not be poſſible for me to go into a very minute detail. To leave nothing to be wiſhed for, it would be right to make refer-

* Neither this, nor his Poems, are continued in the Memoirs de l'Academie, by M. de St. Palaye. T. J.

ences,

ences, at every article, of all the paſſages which precede relative to it, and of all thoſe which follow; but this can only be executed on the original itſelf, and would require all the attention of an Editor who ſhould intereſt himſelf for the advantage of his readers.

II.

A more detailed Plan of Froiſſart's Hiſtory.

THE Hiſtory of Froiſſart is divided into four books, or volumes, as well in all the manuſcripts, as in all the printed editions.

The

The firſt begins with the coronation of Edward III. King of England, in 1326, and with the acceſſion of Philip de Valois to the crown of France in 1328; and cloſes with the year 1379 incluſively.

Froiſſart begins his ſecond volume with the three laſt years of the preceding volume, and with more detail, having gained fuller information than when he firſt wrote it. He continues it until the peace of the men of Ghent with the Duke of Burgundy, the treaty of which is in the laſt chapter but one of this volume, dated the 18th December, 1385.

The third volume goes back as far as the year 1382 incluſively, reciting ſeveral events, which had been mentioned in the ſecond from the 93d chapter un-

til the end. The events of theſe four laſt years, which had been already related, are ſo much expanded in the third volume, that they occupy the 29 firſt chapters. The reſt is employed in the hiſtory of the following years until 1389, ending with the truce concluded for three years between France and England, and with the preparations that were making for the entry of the Queen Iſabella de Baviere into Paris, of which the author promiſes to ſpeak hereafter.

The fourth volume begins with a recital of all the feaſts and magnificences which were made for this entry, and ends with the dethroning and death of Richard II. King of England, in 1400, and with the election which was made that ſame year of Robert, Emperor of

Ger-

Germany. Theſe events terminate the two laſt chapters of the whole work.

This manner of dividing the Hiſtory of Froiſſart is the ſame in all the manuſcripts and printed copies; but theſe diviſions do not always begin or end at the ſame places in all the copies. I will give an account of theſe variations, which, in truth, are not very conſiderable, when I come to where I ſhall treat of the different printed copies and manuſcripts of Froiſſart which have paſſed through my hands.

III.

Diviſion of the four Volumes of Froiſſart into Chapters, and of the firſt Volume into ſeveral Parts.

THE four volumes of the Hiſtory of Froiſſart are each ſubdivided into a great number of chapters, which are differently placed, according to different manuſcripts and printed copies; but, beſides theſe diviſions, in a great many manuſcripts there is one which is particular to the firſt volume. Some have four books, or parts, others ſix, and ſome eight. I will ſpeak more fully when

when I come to mention the manuſcripts of Froiſſart.

It is in one of theſe four, ſix, or eight diviſions of the firſt volume, that one muſt ſeek for the termination of that part of his Hiſtory which Froiſſart carried to England, and preſented to Queen Philippa of Haynault. It neceſſarily precedes theſe books, or parts, in which the death of this Queen in 1369 is related: it even precedes, if I am not miſtaken, every thing one reads prior to 1367, when he was appointed Clerk of the Cloſet to the Queen of England; for, I believe, it was the Hiſtory which he preſented to her that made him known, and gained him the office he held in the houſehold of that Princeſs.

One cannot doubt but that it was poſterior to the recital of the battle of Poitiers in 1356, ſince it was but at that epocha he began to write. One muſt not ſeek for it neither before nor after the years 1357, 1358, 1359, or 1360; I would rather fix on the year 1360: for in that year was the treaty of Bretigny concluded, which gave peace to the French and Engliſh. This period agrees tolerably well with the time our author appears to have gone into England: the circumſtance of the peace naturally intercepted a Hiſtory which had apparently no other object than to treat of deeds of arms.

The ſecond and third volumes are terminated at ſimilar periods; one at the

the peace between the Duke of Burgundy with Ghent in 1385; and the other between the French and Engliſh in 1387.

Froiſſart diſcontinued writing in 1392, and during the following years, which were paſſed in a ſucceſſion of truces between France and England; of which Froiſſart took advantage, by going to England, where he had not been for twenty-ſeven years.

IV.

Did Froiſſart make theſe Diviſions?

ONE may aſk if Froiſſart himſelf divided his Hiſtory in the manner we have related? I do not doubt but he was the author of the diviſion into four volumes; for, beſides that it is ſo in all the manuſcripts, even of thoſe of his own time, he ſometimes cites facts in ſome of theſe volumes which had been related in a former, and makes uſe of theſe expreſſions, "as it is mentioned "in another Hiſtory;" or in theſe words, "as you have before heard re-

"lated

"lated in the preceding book of this "renowned excellent Hiſtory."

But as for the ſub-diviſions of the firſt volume into four, ſix, or eight books, it is not to be found in the moſt antient manuſcripts; beſides, it is not uniformly the ſame in thoſe wherein it is ſeen: I therefore do not heſitate in attributing them to the copyiſts, who have made them of their own accord.

With regard to the chapters of each volume, and the titles of theſe chapters, they are only to be met with in the printed copies; and in the manuſcripts of that time, and poſterior to it, they are different, according to the different manuſcripts or printed copies; and I ſee no probability that Froiſſart was the author of them. One ſingle paſſage may

may create a difficulty on this ſubject. It is in the firſt volume, p. 116, where the Hiſtorian refers you to the preceding chapter; but this paſſage is evidently an interpolation. Notwitſtanding it is in the three black-letter editions, and in thoſe of Denys Sauvage, it is not to be found in any of the manuſcripts which I have ſeen, with the exception of a ſingle one in the National Library, number 8321, which is of the date of the latter end of the fifteenth century, and one of the leaſt authentic copies we have.

V.

The Time which Froiſſart employed in the Compoſition of his Hiſtory.

THE principal of theſe diviſions, that which divides the Hiſtory of Froiſſart into four volumes, ſerves to mark as many different epochas, at which he ſtopped in the courſe of his work; whether from want of materials, having carried his narration to the time of his writing; or whether he wiſhed to take ſome repoſe himſelf, and allow the ſame to his readers: but theſe are not the only places where Froiſſart has ſuſpended the

courſe

courſe of his Hiſtory; many have been pointed out, and I will endeavour to fix a date to them, as well as to others, to the utmoſt of my abilities.

Before entering on this examination, I ſhall explain the manner in which I underſtand Froiſſart diſcontinued to write his Hiſtory. From all I have ſaid of his life, he is ſeen continually occupied with this object: upwards of forty years of his life, reckoning from the time he was twenty, were paſſed in this purſuit: but in ſuch a great length of time, there is one part of it which more directly belongs to the compoſition of this work; I mean that, when, returning from his travels and laborious enquiries, he collected his materials, arranged them, and formed a connected hiſ-

hiſtory, ſuch as we have it at this day. As he worked at it at different times, I ſhall attempt to aſſign to each of the parts the ſuitable time for it; to fix when it was begun and finiſhed; how many years he employed upon it, and the intervals during which he ceaſed to write: I think all theſe details neceſſary. Froiſſart travelled over large tracts of country, and made in ſeveral places long reſidences; he was attached, at different times, to Courts whoſe intereſts were in oppoſition; he lived with a great number of Princes and Lords of different parties. It would have been very difficult for him not to have been biaſſed by prejudices, or influenced by affection for ſome, and hatred to others; and that he ſhould always have ſteered clear

of

of the illuſions of partiality; for his candour alone, would have ſerved to have rendered him more ſuſceptible of them. If all the circumſtances are recollected of the life of our Hiſtorian, which have been related in the preceding pages, and they are connected with thoſe times in which he worked at the compoſition of different parts of his Hiſtory, not only the nature of the information he might be in a ſituation to collect will be manifeſt, as well relative to places, as to the perſons he had ſeen; but thoſe perſons to whom he may be ſuppoſed to have leaned, will be pointed out. Theſe grounds being once eſtabliſhed, will be of very great aſſiſtance in enabling us to appreciate more juſtly the different degrees of authority he deſerves,

ſerves, according to the various matters he treats of, and the times in which he treats of them. Without it being neceſſary for me to explain myſelf more at length on this ſubject, every reader may apply this rule as he ſhall advance in the reading of Froiſſart: it will ſerve him as a guide each ſtep he takes; it will guard him from error or ſeduction; whether the Hiſtorian ſhould have been ill-informed; whether he ſhould wiſh to impoſe on his readers, ſuppoſing it true that he ſhould be capable of ſo doing.

The firſt volume of Froiſſart comprehends, as I have ſaid before, the Hiſtory from 1326 to 1379. This period includes the time of his journey to England, when one may readily ſuppoſe he had

had diſcontinued the work; for, he conſidered it then as being finiſhed to that part, ſince, he ſays, he carried it to England, where he preſented it to the Queen. It ends, as I have already ſaid, about the year 1360; and, as we have ſeen that it was completed in 1361, and that he had only begun on it about the year 1357, it is evident that Froiſſart ſcarcely employed more than three or four years in the compoſition of this part of his work; which nevertheleſs appears to me one of thoſe with which he has taken the moſt pains.

A ſort of connection, which I find between ſeveral chapters of the remainder of this firſt volume, of which the firſt announces others at a great diſtance, convinces me that this remainder has

has been compoſed off-hand, and without interruption; and that, conſequently, the Author only began to write it towards the year 1379, ſince he cloſes it with the account of the events of this ſame year. In truth, I believe that, during the time he paſſed in the ſervice of Queen Philippa from 1361 to 1369, he was more occupied in writing, by her orders, poems on gallantry and love verſes, than in labouring at his Hiſtory; and that, although in his different travels, ſeveral of which were after the death of this Princeſs, he was anxious to gain every information of the hiſtory of his own time, he had not, in the midſt of an agitated life, neither ſufficient leiſure, nor a mind enough diſengaged, to write it. He employed three

or four years in compoſing the laſt half of his firſt volume; for we ſhall ſee, that the following volume, which he did not immediately begin on, was written from 1385 to 1388.

Notwithſtanding Froiſſart may have written the firſt volume at two different times, it ſeems, that the preface, which is at the beginning, was not done until the whole was finiſhed; for, the author ſpeaks in it of his travels into Scotland, whither he did not go until after he had preſented the firſt half of this volume to the Queen of England.

No material interruption is met with in the courſe of the ſecond volume. The author employs the twenty-ſeven firſt chapters in recapitulating the events of the three laſt years of the preceding volume,

lume, which had been too ſuccinctly related. He adds new facts, or new circumſtances, to thoſe he had before told, or rectifies the narration, as having been better informed afterwards; and it is from this that I draw my proof, that there was ſome interval between the compoſition of the firſt volume, and that which followed.

After theſe twenty-ſeven firſt chapters he reſumes the thread of his Hiſtory, which he follows until the peace the men of Ghent obtained from the Duke of Burgundy, and of which he reports the original treaty, dated the 18th December, 1385.

It is towards the year 1385 or 1386, that Froiſſart began to write his ſecond volume: it was finiſhed in 1388. This

ſame year he viſited the Count de Foix; and in the account he gives of his travels he ſays, that different perſons reminded him of events which he had related in his Hiſtory; and theſe events are told in the ſecond volume, which, according to appearances, was immediately written.

There is an interval of upwards of twelve years between the compoſition of this volume and the enſuing one; for, the Author only began on the third in 1390. He then wrote it by order, and at the expence, of the Count de Blois: this he expreſſly ſays in the beginning of the 97th chapter, and 266th page of this volume. There is nothing to prevent us from believing that the preceding volume had been compoſed by the

the orders of the ſame nobleman, ſince I have ſhewn, in the Memoirs of his life, that Froiſſart had appeared to have been attached to his ſervice from the year 1385.

The third volume, which returns to thoſe events that had happened ſince the year 1382, and which gives a fuller account of them, had been, as I have juſt ſaid, begun on in 1390, and was already finiſhed in 1392. The author makes it ſo to be underſtood in that part where he ſpeaks of the conventions entered into by the Duke of Britanny with the King of France. He ſays, that at the time he was finiſhing this book, the Duke had faithfully obſerved them, and had not done any thing worthy of being noticed. We ſhall hereafter wit-

neſs the diſobedience of this Duke in 1392; who, having received Peter de Craon at his palace, at the time a ſtate criminal, he refuſed to obey the orders which Charles VI. ſent him to give him up. This whole volume ſeems to me to have been compoſed without interruption; at leaſt, there is a material connection between ſeveral chapters at a great diſtance from each other.

The interval there is between the third and fourth volumes, ſeems to have been cauſed more to give repoſe to the reader, than to the Hiſtorian; for Froiſſart, in ending the third, announces the events which are to be the materials of the fourth volume. I believe, the Hiſtorian, immediately on completing the third, wrote the 50 firſt chapters of the

fourth volume, which cloſe with the events of 1392.

A great number of manuſcripts, and black-letter editions, which only begin the fourth volume after theſe fifty chapters, form a very natural prejudice in favour of this opinion: beſides, from the year 1392, when they end, two years paſſed in continual negociations between the French and Engliſh; during which, ſeveral truces, but of ſhort duration, were made; which, however, ended at laſt in a peace, or truce, for four years. One cannot doubt but that Froiſſart then interrupted his writing; ſince that was the time he performed his journey into England, where he reſided three months. I believe, this interval was conſiderable, becauſe the re-

mainder of the fourth volume, which ſeems to me to have been written without intermiſſion, was compoſed, if I miſtake not, but ſeveral years after this journey; that is to ſay, towards the end of the fourteenth, or the beginning of the fifteenth century. One finds in it thoſe events which belong to the years 1399 and 1400. I find nothing that may lead us to form any judgment how long a time the Author employed on this laſt part.

It is neceſſary to make one general obſervation on the ſubject of theſe intervals, which I have juſt been ſpeaking of, and of which I have attempted to determine the length. When our Hiſtorian finiſhed one of the parts of his Hiſtory, he brought it down to the time

time when he was writing; and towards the end he related the events as they were paſſing: from whence it happens, as it ſeems to me, that there is much confuſion, often omiſſions and miſtakes, which he has been obliged to correct, or alter, in the following parts. It is probably theſe different ſupplements which have made him take in many places the title not only of "Actor," that is to ſay, Author, but in addition to it, that of Augmentator, of this Hiſtory; and that he ſays, in other parts of it, "to have undertaken, continued, "and augmented."

VI. *The*

VI.

The Enquiries Froiſſart made to compoſe his Hiſtory, and the Pains he took on this Subject.

IT has been ſhewn with how much pains and fatigues Froiſſart had viſited the greater part of the Courts in Europe. Admitted into the palaces of the greateſt Lords, he inſinuated himſelf into their confidence to ſo great a degree, that they not only related to him many particulars of their own lives, and of thoſe events in which they had had a ſhare, or been eye-witneſſes of; but they diſcovered

covered to him ſometimes the ſecret of the reſolutions which had been entered into in the councils of the Cabinet, upon the moſt important affairs: he never failed to take advantage of his converſations with thoſe with whom he could converſe and interrogate with greater freedom.

It ſeems that he had learnt many details of the Court of France from the ſervants even of the King, and from thoſe who were near to his perſon.

If in his travels, at Court, or in other places he viſited, he met with any from whom he thought he could gain information, more eſpecially Captains, or Heralds, who in thoſe times were the moſt uſual agents in negociations, and in affairs of importance; he began a converſation with them, and inſenſibly led

led them to ſpeak of thoſe parts of hiſtory of which they ought to be beſt informed, whether in regard to the country where they were, or to other circumſtances of their lives: and he never quitted them until he had made them tell all they knew; all of which he immediately ſet down in writing.

Not content to collect all theſe precious authorities, and to compare very carefully, as he himſelf informs us, the information of perſons who had been attached to different parties, he ſought for proofs ſtill leſs liable to ſuſpicion. He conſulted the treaties which Princes had entered into with each other, their challenges, or declarations of war, the letters they wrote to each other, and other papers of this nature. He expreſſly ſays, that

that he had ſeen many which he does not introduce; particularly thoſe of the Chancery of the King of England; and ſome of them are tranſcribed entire in the courſe of his Hiſtory. It appears that he did not chooſe every thing he found as chance offered them, but that he examined them critically, and laid aſide all thoſe whoſe authenticity did not ſeem to him fully proven.

VII. *What*

VII.

What End Froiſſart propoſed to himſelf in writing his Hiſtory; and what Rules he had laid down to himſelf in writing it.

ONE may eaſily judge, from the detail of the attentions which Froiſſart himſelf tells us he took, that he was acquainted with the rules of ſound criticiſm, and the true method which ought to be followed in writing hiſtory. He likewiſe informs us, that he had not the intention of making a dry Chronicle, wherein facts are ſimply related with their

their dates, and in the order they happened, but that he was anxious to write what may be called in truth Hiſtory, in which the events were preſented with all the circumſtances which had attended them. The details which lay open the ſecret ſprings by which mankind act, are preciſely thoſe which unveil the character and the very heart of the perſonages which Hiſtory places on the ſtage; and this was one of the eſſential parts of the deſign which Froiſſart had propoſed to himſelf in writing Hiſtory.

Many paſſages in his work indicate that he had a natural inclination for it, and that he found infinite pleaſure in working at it; but another object, which does him much more honour, had greatly ſtrengthened this natural taſte:

taſte: he propoſed to preſerve, for ages to come, the memory of thoſe men who had made themſelves renowned by their courage, or by their virtues; to give to their actions a value, which nothing can efface, or alter; and, by amuſing uſefully his readers, to give birth to, or augment in their hearts, the love of glory, by the moſt brilliant examples.

This deſire, which always animated him in his various enquiries, ſupported him during forty years of labour, in which he neither ſpared attention nor time, and for which he feared not expending very conſiderable ſums of money. In effect, nothing can be more proper than the ſpectacle which Froiſſart places continually before the eyes of his readers, to inſpire them with a love for war; that in-

induſtrious vigilance, always on its guard againſt ſurprizes, is inceſſantly active to ſurprize others; that activity, which counts as nothing pains and fatigue; that contempt of death, which elevates the mind above the fear of danger; in ſhort, that noble ambition which excites to enterprizes of the greateſt peril.

He paſſes in review all the heroes which, nearly during a whole century, were produced by two warlike nations; one of which was encouraged by ſucceſſes as flattering as they were uninterrupted; and the other, irritated by its misfortunes, was making exertions to revenge, at whatever price it may be, its own honour and its King. In ſo great a number of actions, of which many were extremely glorious to each

party, it is not poſſible but that ſome were to be found of a quite different ſort. Froiſſart does not take the leſs pains to paint theſe laſt, in order to give as much horror for vice, as he wiſhed to inſpire love for virtue: but, if all theſe pictures had been the fruits of his own imagination, they would not have been felt as much as he wiſhed them. In order that their impreſſion on the heart and mind ſhould be perfectly ſure, and ſtrong, it was neceſſary that their baſis ſhould be founded on the pureſt truth, diſengaged from all flattery, as well as from partiality, or intereſt.

It is this truth which our Hiſtorian piques himſelf with having ſought after with the greateſt care. However, all I have

have juſt ſaid is taken from his own words, ſpread over an infinity of paſſages, in his Hiſtory; and it is this alone that I guarantee. It remains to be ſeen if he has as faithfully obſerved this law which he impoſes on himſelf, as he has promiſed it. But before I enter into an examination of this queſtion, I ſhall make ſome general obſervations on his chronology: I ſhall then ſpeak of the thirty-firſt years of his Hiſtory, which are, properly ſpeaking, but an introduction to the forty, and ſome years which follow them, until the end of the fifteenth century.

VI.

counting the years; he makes them ſometimes begin the 1ſt of January, at other times at Eaſter; others even at Palm Sunday.

Froiſſart does not confine himſelf to date by years the events he relates: months, days, hours of the day, are often expreſſed in his different recitals. I remark, with regard to the days, that he only begins them when night is completely gone, and that day-break begins to appear. With regard to the hours of the day, he gives them a diviſion, of which ſome examples, but in a ſmall number, are ſeen in our antient authors, and to which he very particularly attaches himſelf. He divides them according to the canonical hours of *prime*, *tierce*, *none*, and *vêpres*; becauſe, per-

haps, he was in the eccleſiaſtical line himſelf. I obſerve, that he has not any where made uſe of the word *ſexte*: what he means by *prime*, was the morning, the firſt hour of the day, or the hour which followed next after day-break. *Tierce* ſeems to me, to mark the intermediate time between the morning and mid-day, which he expreſſes either by the word mid-day, or by that of *none*. Afterwards comes *vêpre*, or, *la vêprée*: it was, as the word points out, the end of the day; after which was reckoned mid-night. Sometimes he adds to theſe words of *prime*, *tierce*, *none*, *vêpres*, the epithet of *baſſe*, to mark that the time of theſe hours was near cloſing; and ſometimes the word *haute*, which, in ſome inſtances, appears to have the

ſame

ſame ſignification, and in others quite the contrary. He uſes this mode of ſpeech *à l'aube crevant*, to ſay, that the dawn of day has but juſt begun to ſhew itſelf; *au ſoleil reſconſant*, to expreſs the ſetting ſun; *à la relevée*, for the time which follows the hour of mid-day; and *à la remontée*, which ſeems to me ſynonymous to *la vêprée*, for the evening, the time at which the day approaches to its end.

IX.

Of the firſt Thirty Years which Froiſſart has treated of at the Beginning of his Hiſtory, after John le Bel; that is to ſay, from 1326 *to* 1356.

THE firſt thirty years of the hiſtory of Froiſſart are properly but a preliminary, which ſerves to give the reader ſome information relative to the wars which he was afterwards to give an account of. He deſcribes the ſtate of France and of England; and ſhews the cauſe of the quarrel between the two Crowns, which was the origin of thoſe bloody

bloody wars they carried on reciprocally againſt each other. Froiſſart cannot be reckoned a contemporary writer of theſe firſt thirty years; he was not born, or if he was, he was in his infancy, or of ſuch an age that he could not make any great uſe of his reaſon. He therefore ſcarcely ever mentions theſe thirty years, as an author who has ſeen what he relates; and, without doubt, it muſt be to this period alone that one can refer what he ſays in the commencement of his Hiſtory, that he wrote after another who had lived before: it is, as he tells us, "the true Chronicles of John "le Bel, Canon of St. Lambert, of "Liege." Theſe Chronicles have not been handed down to us; and I cannot diſcover any thing more, either concerning

cerning the work, or its author, but what Froiſſart tells us. He ſpeaks of him as of one who no longer exiſted; but he boaſts his exactneſs, and the pains he took in comparing his Chronicles, and the conſiderable expences he was at on this ſubject. He repreſents him as the favourite and confidant of John of Haynault, in company with whom he might have witneſſed ſeveral great events, which, ſays he, ſhall in the end be related; for the Earl, who was nearly related to ſeveral Kings, had played a principal part in many of theſe tranſactions.

Froiſſart, in theſe thirty years, which are anterior to the battle of Poitiers, in 1356, enters more into the detail of the hiſtory of the Engliſh than of the French, perhaps from having

ving followed, in this reſpect, his original author, who had taken a much greater intereſt in the Hiſtory of England, from its connexions with the Count de Haynault. This certainly is the cauſe why thoſe manuſcripts, which only contain the firſt years of the Chronicle of Froiſſart, are called Chronicles of England; and alſo has given riſe to the reproach which has been made to him of being the partizan of England, and ill-inclined towards France; an accuſation which I ſhall examine at the end of this criticiſm.

I do not think Froiſſart could have choſen a better guide for the hiſtory of the thirty years, than the author he ſays he followed. To judge of the information which this Hiſtorian might have drawn

drawn from the intimacy with which he lived with John of Haynault, one muſt recollect the ſituation in which this Earl then was. The Queen of England, Iſabella of France, had fled from England with the young Prince of Wales, her ſon, afterwards Edward III. to free herſelf from the perſecutions of the Spencers, and the other favourites of her huſband, Edward II.

Charles le bel, King of France, brother to this Queen, was forced to order her to quit his kingdom, after he had afforded her an aſylum for ſome time. The Court of the Count de Haynault, of whom we are ſpeaking, was the only reſource for the mother and ſon: not only was this open to them, but they found there powerful ſuccours to carry

with

with them to England, and to draw down vengeance on their enemies.

The young Prince had there met a virtuous and amiable Princeſs (ſhe was one of the daughters of the Count), who felt for him thoſe firſt ſentiments of a natural inclination, which ſeem to foretell the moſt durable attachments: he conceived a ſtrong affection for her, made her his bride, and afterwards ſhe was placed with him on the throne of England. It is the ſame to whom Froiſſart preſented his Hiſtory.

Froiſſart wrote then after an author who was himſelf perſonally acquainted with all theſe facts, and from the perſons the beſt informed; for it was their own hiſtory. The writer who appears to have been brought up at the Court of the

the Count de Haynault, was living in the greateſt familiarity with thoſe, to whom all the circumſtances of this Court, which were then recent, would be in their recollection, and perfectly well known to them; and he wrote the hiſtory of it for Queen Philippa, of Haynault, who had acted ſo principal a part in it: never was there an Hiſtorian who had more undeniable witneſſes of the facts he relates. Never was there one, in whom greater confidence could be placed, than in Froiſſart in this part of his Hiſtory. You will, however, recollect the faults which M. Lancelot has corrected in ſeveral articles which concern the Hiſtory of England at this period. His criticiſm is founded on the original acts which he has had in his

hands,

hands, and whoſe authority is unqueſtionable. I urge this example, becauſe it ſeems to me more proper than any other, to make a truth, important to our Hiſtory, more ſtrongly felt, and which has been ſo much recommended by authors the moſt verſed in this ſtudy: I mean, the abſolute neceſſity of accompanying the ſtudy of Hiſtory, with the comparing it with the original acts of thoſe times.

Some of them enlighten parts which are wanting, while others add to the teſtimonies of Hiſtory a degree of authenticity of which they are but in too much need; and it is from this compariſon, that the certitude of theſe truths reſults as much as their nature is ſuſceptible with regard to us. I ſhall reſerve for another

another opportunity to ſpeak of thoſe forty and ſome years following, which Froiſſart wrote as a contemporary Hiſtorian, and as an eye-witneſs, I may ſay, of every thing which was then paſſing in the world. But I ſhall firſt examine the different judgments which have been paſſed on this Hiſtorian, and particularly the almoſt univerſal reproach which has been made to him, of being a violent partizan of the Engliſh, and a declared enemy to the French. I ſhall ſpeak of his partiality in other reſpects, his credulity in certain articles, his exactneſs in others, and his mode of writing: I will then enumerate the detail of the editions which we have of his Hiſtory; I will diſcuſs the merits and faults of each of them; I ſhall, more eſ-

eſpecially examine whether that of Sauvage has more corrupted and falſified the text, than it has enlightened it.

In ſhort, I ſhall give a ſummary account of upwards of forty volumes, in folio, of manuſcripts of this Hiſtory, which I have collated with great attention.

A

CRITICISM

ON THE

HISTORY OF FROISSART.

Translated from the French of

M. DE LA CURNE DE ST. PALAYE,

BY

THOMAS JOHNES.

I HAVE laid before you the views with which Froiſſart wrote his Chronicles, the care he took to be informed of all the events which were to make parts of it, and the rules he had impoſed on himſelf in writing it. I ſhall at preſent examine if he has been exact in obſerving theſe rules; what are the defects and advantages of his Hiſtory; what is the form and ſtyle of it. From thence I ſhall paſs to the manuſcripts and editions we have of it; then to the abridgements and different tranſlations which have been publiſhed.

Froiſſart is accuſed of partiality; and this accuſation is become ſo general, that it ſeems to have acquired the character of notoriety; whoſe privilege is to ſuperſede proofs. Froiſſart is ſaid to have ſold his pen to the Engliſh, who paid him a conſiderable penſion; and, by a neceſſary conſequence of his affection for them, he is unfavourable to the French.

Bodin, Paſquier, Brantôme, Sorel, la Popeliniere, le Laboureur, decide againſt him in the moſt poſitive terms. It ſeems even that his readers, prejudiced by the connexions which Froiſſart had with the Engliſh, may have ſome reaſon to diſtruſt every thing he relates to their advantage. In truth, he begins by ſaying, that he had written his Hiſ-

tory

tory at the ſolicitations of Robert de Namur, a near relation of the Queen Philippa, and a vaſſal of the Crown of England, which he uſefully ſerved againſt France. In another part he informs us, that he was of the houſehold of Edward III. the moſt cruel enemy of the French; and that his Queen, to whom he was Secretary, had not only, by her liberalities, enabled him to travel into various parts in order to enrich his Hiſtory, but that ſhe had generouſly paid him for his labours in it.

In ſhort, the firſt twenty-ſix chapters of his Chronicle ſolely concern the Hiſtory of England, which has been the reaſon why it has been called the "Chronicle of England" in ſeveral manuſcripts. From thence it has been

concluded, that Froiſſart, from his intimate attachment to the Court of England, muſt be a violent partizan of that nation, and the enemy of its enemies. Nothing more was wanted for the moſt innocent accounts, if given by any other Hiſtorian, appearing as poiſonous if iſſued from his pen: but, in order to judge if this ſuſpicion has any foundation, I will run over the period of which he has tranſmitted to us the hiſtory, in examining ſucceſſively the different ſituations he was in when he wrote the various parts of it.

Froiſſart cannot be ſuſpected of partiality during the firſt years of the reign of Edward III. This Prince never forgot that his uncle, King Charles le bel, had given him an aſylum in his kingdom;

dom; when, with his mother, Iſabella of France, he had eſcaped from the perſecutions of the Spencers, who governed the mind of his father, Edward II.

The Court of France had not any miſunderſtanding with that of England during the reign of Charles. I paſs over for a moment the forty years which followed from 1329, when the ſucceſſion to the Crown of France being opened by the death of Charles le bel, the bonds which had united the Kings of France and England became themſelves the ſource of diviſions and of the moſt murderous wars; and I come to the times which ſucceeded the death of Queen Philippa in 1369, a period when Froiſſart, no longer reſiding in England, had

had attached himſelf to Winceſlaus, Duke of Brabant. This Prince, brother to the Emperor Charles IV. was, in fact, uncle to Anne of Bohemia, who was afterwards Queen of England, by her marriage with Richard II.; but he was alſo in the ſame degree of relationſhip with Charles V. of France, the ſon of his ſiſter, and preſerving a ſtrict neutrality between the two rival Crowns, he was invited to the Coronations of Charles V. and of Charles VI. He obtained even in the laſt of theſe ceremonies the pardon of the Count de St. Pol, whom the King's Council wiſhed to put to death for the crime of high treaſon.

Froiſſart, who informs us of this circumſtance, with which he muſt have been well acquainted, tells us another,

which

which clearly ſhews, that Winceſlaus ever preſerved the friendſhip of King Charles, as well as that of his Council. During the time the war was carrying on with the greateſt obſtinacy, he obtained a paſſport for the Princeſs Anne of Bohemia to go to England, where ſhe was to marry Richard II. Charles and his uncles accompanied this favour with the moſt obliging letters, adding, they only granted it out of friendſhip to him. Froiſſart had not any intereſt to write againſt France during the time he paſſed with this Prince; he had, ſhortly afterwards, ſtill leſs, when he was Secretary to the Count de Blois, who crowned a life, completely devoted to the intereſts of France, by the ſacrifice of the intereſts of his own family. The moſt trifling

ſling marks of ill-will againſt France would have expoſed him to loſe not only the good graces of his maſter, but the fruit of his hiſtorical labours, which he had induced him to continue, and which he ſo generouſly recompenſed. The Hiſtorian therefore, fearful of the reproaches which might be made him for being too good a Frenchman, reproaches very different from thoſe which have been ſince made him, thinks himſelf bound to juſtify, in the following terms, what he relates of the inviolable attachment of the Bretons to the Crown of France againſt the Engliſh, vol. III. chapter LXIV. p. 193, year 1387. "Let "no one ſay I have been corrupted by "the favour which the Count Guy de "Blois (who has made me write this

"Hiſ-

" Hiſtory) has ſhewn unto me, and who
" has ſo liberally paid me for it that I
" am ſatisfied, becauſe he was nephew
" to the true Duke of Britanny, and
" ſo nearly related as ſon to Count
" Louis de Blois, brother-german to
" Charles de Blois, who, as long as he
" lived, was Duke of Britanny: no,
" by my troth, it is not ſo; for I will
" not ſpeak at all, unleſs it be the truth,
" and go ſtrait forward, without colour-
" ing one more than another: beſides,
" the gallant Prince and Court, who
" have made me undertake this Hiſtory,
" had no other wiſh but for me to ſay
" what is true."

Since Froiſſart, in all theſe times which carry us almoſt to the end of his Chronicle, cannot be ſuſpected of hatred

[illegible] me of affection to
[illegible] years I
[illegible] of
[illegible] part in
[illegible] King and
[illegible] of fami-
[illegible] Princes, their
[illegible] these years,
[illegible] to the
[illegible] greateſt
[illegible] Court
[illegible] to
[illegible] per-
[illegible] of an
[illegible] ſhould
[illegible] Princes
[illegible] fortune,
[illegible]

One might find reaſons to weaken this prejudice in the ſweetneſs and moderation which Queen Philippa ever preſerved in the midſt of all theſe wars; who calmed the fury of her huſband at the ſiege of Calais, and who obtained, by her inſtances, the pardon of the ſix generous citizens of that town, whom he had condemned to death. I might add, that if Froiſſart was of the houſehold of King Edward, he was alſo of the houſehold of King John; and it ſeems, he was attached to this Prince even at the time when he was in England.

But, without ſeeking to combat theſe prejudices by others, I ſhall ſimply conſult the text of Froiſſart, which muſt, in this reſpect, be the rule for our judgment.

judgment. After having read him with all the attention I am capable of, without having remarked one ſingle trace of the partiality they reproach him with, I have examined with the utmoſt care ſome principal points, where naturally it ought to have been the moſt apparent.

The acceſſion of Philip de Valois to the Crown had incenſed all England, who adopted the chimerical pretenſions of Edward III. This was a delicate circumſtance for an Hiſtorian; who, living in the midſt of a Court, and a nation ſo ſtrongly prejudiced, was determined not to quit the line of duty. Now, theſe are the terms in which Froiſſart relates this event, after having mentioned the deaths of the Kings, Louis Hutin, Philip le long, and Charles le bel: "The

"twelve

" twelve Peers and Barons of France
" did not give the realm of France to
" their ſiſter, who was Queen of Eng-
" land, becauſe they declared and main-
" tained, and ſtill reſolve, that the
" kingdom of France is ſo noble, that
" it ought not to deſcend to a female,
" nor conſequently to the King of Eng-
" land, her eldeſt ſon; for thus they
" determine, that the ſon of a female
" cannot claim any right of ſucceſſion
" as coming from his mother, when the
" mother herſelf has not any right; ſo
" that, for theſe reaſons, the twelve
" Peers and the Barons of France una-
" nimouſly decreed the kingdom of
" France to my Lord Philip, nephew
" to the good King Philip, of France,
" before-mentioned, and took from the

" Queen of England and her ſon the " right of ſucceeding to the laſt King, " Charles. Thus, as it appeared to " many perſons, did the kingdom of " France go out of the ſtrait line of " ſucceſſion, which occaſioned very " great wars in conſequence, &c."

This whole paſſage preſents nothing but what muſt make one admire the courage and candour of the Hiſtorian, when even he ſhould have added theſe words, " it appeared to many perſons;" ſince it is not any matter of doubt that the ſucceſſion paſſed from the ſtrait line to the collateral branch.

Nevertheleſs, ſome malignant intention was thought to lurk beneath, and the words " took from" having offended ſome readers, they have added in the margin

margin a ſort of correction, which I have ſeen in two manuſcripts in a hand almoſt as antient as the manuſcripts themſelves: "They never could take "away what they had never been in "poſſeſſion of, nor had any right to. "They never took it away; for, neither "the foreſaid lady, nor her ſon, had "even a right to it; but Froiſſart ſhows "he was partial to the Engliſh."

The homage which King Edward III. paid to the King of France, hurt exceedingly the delicacy of the Engliſh: they had diſputed for ſome time, and with great warmth, on the form in which it was to be made; ſeeking to curtail it of all that was humiliating to them. As the King of France firmly ſupported the prerogatives of his Crown,

and obliged Edward to acquit himſelf of this duty according to the terms which had been practiſed by his predeceſſors, an Hiſtorian who was deſirous of being complaiſant would have ſlightly paſſed over this article. Froiſſart, however, inſiſts upon it as much as he is able; he neither omits the difficulties which the Engliſh made, nor the authorities which King Philip oppoſed to them; and he accompanies theſe details with the original acts the moſt proper to confirm them; ſo that, if the Kings of France ſhould ever have occaſion to verify their rights, the depoſition alone of Froiſſart would furniſh an authentic and inconteſtable title.

The Engliſh accuſe the French of not being very ſcrupulous in obſerving

treaties;

treaties; and maintain, that Sir Geoffry de Charni acted by the ſecret orders of the King of France, when, in contempt of a truce which had been made, he attempted to ſurprize Calais in 1349. Rapin embraces this opinion, and ſupports it by the teſtimony of Froiſſart, whom he quotes in the margin. I know not from what copy, nor what manuſcript, he has taken his authority; but, for my part, I read in all the printed and in all the manuſcripts theſe words, which are quite contrary to his ſentiments: "I believe, that Geoffry de "Charni had never ſpoken of it to the "King of France; for, the King would "never have adviſed him to attempt it, "on account of the truce."

The Engliſh again impute to Charles V. the infraction of the treaty of Bretigny, which they firſt broke, if we believe the French. Far from finding any thing in Froiſſart which favours the Engliſh pretenſions, I believe that, if the terms in which he expreſſes himſelf were ſtrictly examined, they would at leaſt form a preſumption againſt them. I do not deſpair but that one day a brother academician will give us all the proofs which a ſound criticiſm, and a mature reading of the hiſtorical monuments of that age, can furniſh on a point of Hiſtory which is of equal conſequence to the nation and to truth.

The ſingular combat propoſed in 1954 between the Kings of France and of England,

England, is ſtill a matter of diſpute between the Hiſtorians of the two nations. According to the French, the challenge ſent in the name of King John was not accepted by Edward; whilſt the Engliſh ſay, their King dared the King of France to battle, but that he refuſed the combat: Froiſſart decides formally for the French. "The King of France," ſays he, "went after him as far as St. "Omer, and ſent to him (the King of "England) by the Marſhal d'Authain, "and by ſeveral other knights, that he "would fight with him, if he pleaſed, "body to body, or ſtrength againſt "ſtrength, any day he would name: "but the King of England refuſed the "combat, and re-croſſed the ſea to

 "England;

" England; and the King of France re-
" turned to Paris."

To theſe examples, I could add a great number of other paſſages where he gives much praiſe, as well to the people, as to the Lords who ſignalized themſelves by their attachment to the party of the French, and wherein he neither ſpares thoſe who had declared themſelves againſt, nor thoſe who had cowardly abandoned them. In addition to what he ſays of the fidelity of the Bretons, and of the Counts de Blois, their legitimate ſovereigns, he praiſes the zeal with which ſeveral Lords in Scotland received the French fleet ſent in 1385 to aſſiſt them againſt the Engliſh. The Earl of Douglas, to whom he

he appears much attached, and in whoſe caſtle he had ſpent ſeveral days in his travels into Scotland, ſeems to be of this number. At the ſame time he declaims againſt thoſe whoſe bad faith, and ingratitude, rendered this armament fruitleſs. He ſpeaks in the ſtrongeſt terms of the preſumption of the Duke of Gueldres, who dared to declare war againſt the King of France (Charles VI.) in 1387, and of the inſolence with which he expreſſed himſelf in his declaration of war. He applauds the juſt indignation which induced this monarch to march in perſon to chaſtiſe the pride of this petty Prince.

In ſhort, of all the nations whom he ſpeaks of in his Hiſtory, there are but few

few whom he has not ſometimes marked with odious epithets. According to him, the Portugueze are paſſionate and quarrelſome; the Spaniards envious, haughty, and uncleanly; the Scots perfidious and ungrateful; the Italians aſſaſſins and poiſoners; the Engliſh vain-boaſters, contemptuous, and cruel. There is not one trait againſt the French: on the contrary, this brave nation ſupports itſelf, according to Froiſſart, by the vigour and ſtrength of its knighthood, which was never ſo totally overwhelmed by its misfortunes, as not in the end to find ſome marvellous reſources in its courage. The Hiſtorian alſo ſeems to have taken a pride in having been born Frenchman, in telling us, that he owed

owed to this title the good reception which a French eſquire gave him, when he lodged with him at Ortez.

It is true, that the King of England, and his ſon the Prince of Wales, ſeem to have been, as long as they lived, the heroes of his Hiſtory; and that, in the recital of ſeveral battles, he is more occupied with them than with the King of France. But, where is the Frenchman of candour, who will not find himſelf forced to give theſe Princes the utmoſt praiſe? Beſides, does not our Hiſtorian render juſtice to the valour and intrepidity of King Philip de Valois, and of King John? Nothing can ſurpaſs the praiſes he gives as well to the wiſdom as to the ability of King Charles V.; and, above all, that glorious teſtimony which

which he makes no difficulty to put into the mouth of the King of England: "There never was a King who ſo little "armed himſelf; and there never was a "King who gave me ſo much to do."

I think I have fully eſtabliſhed, by all that you have juſt read, that Froiſſart was not that partial Hiſtorian he has been accuſed of. Nevertheleſs, I think it will be more ſure to read him with ſome circumſpection, and that one ought, as much as may be poſſible, never to loſe ſight, I repeat it, of two objects which I have particularly endeavoured to make obſerved in the preceding pages: I mean to ſay, on one hand, the details of his life, his different attachments to divers Princes and to certain Lords, the connexions he had, of

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the friendſhips he contracted with various perſons; on the other, the ſituations in which he was placed when he wrote his Hiſtory, what parts of it were undertaken at the ſolicitation of the Count de Namur, a partizan of the Engliſh, and thoſe which he compoſed by the orders of the Count de Blois, a friend to France.

For, if one is determined to perſuade oneſelf that he ought to be diſpoſed to favour the Engliſh in all he relates until 1369; from the ſame reaſon, he ſhould lean to the French in all the enſuing years until the concluſion of his Chronicle. I ought not to neglect to mention that his prejudices are ſometimes viſible when he enters into the minuteſt details,

details, as one may be convinced of by the praiſes he gives to the piety and other virtues of the Count de Foix, ſtrongly contraſted by thoſe actions of cruelty he had juſt before related. But when an Hiſtorian, diſengaged from all paſſion, ſhould hold an even balance between the different parties; when to this quality he adds that which cannot be refuſed to Froiſſart, I mean, a continual anxiety to be informed of every event, and of every particular, that may intereſt his readers; he will yet be very far from perfection, if to theſe acquirements he does not add ſound criticiſm, which, in the multitude of diſcordant relations, knows how to ſeparate every thing that is diſtant from truth; or his

work

work will otherwiſe be leſs an Hiſtory, than a heap of fables and popular rumours.

Notwithſtanding all Froiſſart tells us of the care he took to hear both ſides, and to compare their different accounts with each other, often with the original pieces, I think he may be accuſed of ſome little negligence on this head. His manner of life allowed him but little leiſure to make all the reflections and all the comparifons which ſuch an examination would require. In thoſe countries whither his active curioſity carried him, other attentions occupied his mind. Charged ſometimes with ſecret commiſſions, he endeavoured to inſinuate himſelf into the good graces of thoſe Princes he viſited, by compoſitions

of

of gallantry, by romances, by poetry; and the love he ever had for pleaſure took ſuch poſſeſſion of both his time and his heart, that his mind muſt have been often turned from the ſerious meditations of the cabinet, of which naturally it was not very capable. I am not afraid to ſay, that his manner of life is to be found in ſome ſort re-traced even in his Chronicles. One ſees in them tumultuous meetings of warriors of all ages, degrees, and countries; feaſts; entertainments at inns; converſations after ſupper, which laſted until a late hour; where every one was eager to relate what he had ſeen, or done: after which, the travelling Hiſtorian, before he went to bed, haſtened to put on paper every thing his memory could recollect.

recollect. One ſees in them the hiſtory of events which happened during the courſe of almoſt a century, in all the provinces of the kingdom, and of all the people in Europe, related without order. In a ſmall number of chapters one frequently meets with ſeveral different hiſtories, begun, interrupted, recommenced, and again broken off; and in this confuſion the ſame things repeated, whether in order to be corrected, contradicted, or denied, or whether to be augmented.

The Hiſtorian ſeems to have carried even to his compoſition of the Chronicle his love of romances, and to have imitated the diſorder which reigns in theſe ſort of works; from which one might ſay he has affected even to borrow their

ſtyle. Thus, for example, when he begins a narrative, he frequently uſes this expreſſion, " Now the tale ſays;" and when he ſpeaks of the death of any one, or ſome other melancholy event, he adds, " but amend it he could not;" phraſes which are to be met with in almoſt every page of the romances of the Round Table.

However, all I ſay of this romantick taſte of Froiſſart, which he ſeems to have preſerved in his Hiſtory, applies ſolely to the ſtyle he makes uſe of; for I have never once obſerved that he attempts to embelliſh it with the marvellous. The faults which are met with contrary to hiſtorical exactneſs, ariſe ſolely from the natural confuſion of his mind, the precipitation with which he wrote,

wrote, and the ignorance he muſt neceſſarily have been in reſpecting many things, which would have eſcaped his enquiries. What he relates of diſtant countries, ſuch as Africa, Hungary, Tartary, and, in general, the Eaſtern parts of the world, is full of the groſſeſt blunders. In his time commerce had not then formed any connexion with thoſe countries and our own: what was known of them, was founded on the faith of thoſe whom accident had carried thither, and who had reſided too ſhort a time among them to gain ſufficient information reſpecting the manners, cuſtoms, and hiſtory of theſe people. But if Froiſſart has committed many faults in what he relates to us, the greateſt, without doubt, is to have

ſpoken at all of what he could not but imperfectly know.

All theſe defects and imperfections do not prevent his Chronicle from being conſidered as one of the moſt precious monuments of our Hiſtory; and that the peruſal of it ſhould not be as agreeable as inſtructive to thoſe who, not confining themſelves to the knowledge of general facts, ſeek in the details, whether of particular events, whether of the uſages of that age, to develope the character of mankind, and of the centuries which have paſſed.

Froiſſart was born to tranſmit to poſterity a living picture of an age, enemy to repoſe; and which, amid the intervals of troubles with which it was almoſt continually agitated, found relaxation only

only in the moſt tumultuous pleaſures.

Beſides the wars of ſo many nations which he deſcribes, and in which he informs us of divers uſages reſpecting the Ban and Arriere-Ban, the attack and defence of places, fortifications, detachments, ſkirmiſhes, orders of battle, artillery, marine, the armour of thoſe on foot, and thoſe on horſeback; one finds in this Hiſtory every thing which can excite curioſity with regard to the nobility and knighthood, their challenges, their deadly combats, tilts, tournaments, entries of Princes, aſſemblies, feaſts, balls, the dreſſes of both ſexes; ſo that his Chronicle is for us a complete body of the antiquities of the fourteenth century. One muſt own

that theſe details only attract attention from their own ſingularity; they are related without ſtudy, and without art: it is, in truth, the familiar converſation with a man of underſtanding, who has ſeen a great deal, and tells his ſtory well. Nevertheleſs, this amiable ſtory-teller knows how, at times, and in particular when he ſpeaks of any grand event, to unite the majeſty of Hiſtory with the ſimplicity of a tale. Let any one read, among other things, among ſo many battles which he has ſo excellently painted; let him read the recital of the famous battle of Poitiers, they will there ſee in the perſon of the Prince of Wales a hero, far greater by the generoſity with which he made uſe of his victory, by his attentions to a conquered

Prince,

Prince, and by the reſpect he always paid him, than by thoſe efforts of courage which had made him triumph. I do not believe there is any thing which can equal the ſublimity of this morſel of Hiſtory, nothing which can more elevate the heart and mind. Others, of a very different nature, have their value in their ſimplicity: ſuch is the epiſode of the love of the King of England for the Counteſs of Saliſbury; the tender and affecting recital of which does not yield to the moſt ingenious and beſt-written romances. The Hiſtorian ſometimes takes a gay tone; as in the chapter wherein he ſpeaks of the impatience of the young King Charles VI. to receive his new bride; and in that wherein he relates the jokes which this Prince

made on his uncle, the Duke of Berry, who, at a time of life not very ſuitable for love, married a young and amiable wife.

The taſte of the author is very viſible in the manner which he treats theſe ſubjects; but, as the age he lived in knew how to conciliate all things, this taſte did not exclude the fund of devotion which runs through the courſe of his work. It is only to be wiſhed that he had not degraded his religion, by a credulity ridiculouſly ſuperſtitious; falſe miracles, prophecies, enchantments, have nothing in them ſo abſurd as not to find in him an unbounded and blind belief. Every one knows the tale he tells of the demon Gorgon. One can ſcarcely comprehend how he can connect with

with Chriſtianity the example which he draws from the fable of Acteon to juſtify the probability of an adventure of the ſame ſort, which makes part of this tale. He has beſides been reproached with having diſhonoured Hiſtory by his too great minuteneſs. I agree that we readily would have diſpenſed with his telling us at what ſign thoſe lodged of whom he was ſpeaking, and from pointing out the inns where he himſelf had ſometimes taken up his quarters; but I cannot equally condemn the love adventures, the feaſts, and ceremonies, of which he has left us deſcriptions. When his narrations ſhall not be of ſubjects ſufficiently noble, yet he paints ſo agreeably and ſo true the age of which he writes the Hiſtory, that it would,

would, I think, be ungrateful to make any complaints.

I have inſerted ſummarily in this judgment a ſketch of the opinions which different authors have given of him; and they may be conſulted. I will add that of an author who knew better than any other the full value of a ready and natural genius.

"I love," ſays Montagne, "Hiſto-
"rians very unaffected or excellent:
"the unaffected, who have not where-
"withal to add of their own, and who
"are only careful to collect and pick
"up every thing which falls within
"their notice, and to put down every
"thing without choice and without
"ſorting, give us the opportunity of
"wholly judging of their truth. Such;

"for

"for example, is the good Froiſſart,
"who has gone on with his work with
"ſuch a frank ſimplicity, that, having
"committed a fault, he is no way
"aſhamed of avowing it, and correct-
"ing it at the place he is informed of
"it; and who tells us the diverſity of
"rumours which were current, and the
"different accounts that were told to
"him. It is Hiſtory, naked and un-
"adorned; every one may profit from
"it, according to the depth of his un-
"derſtanding."

I come now to the editions of Froiſſart. We have three black-letter ones, and two poſterior to them: that which I believe to be the oldeſt, is by Anthony Verard, at Paris, without a date, three volumes in folio. The ſecond is, Paris,

by

by Michael le Noir, the 15th July, 1505, two volumes in folio; a handſome type. The third is, Paris, by Galliot du Pré, 1530, three volumes in folio. The fourth, Lyons, by John de Tournes, 1559, 1560, 1561, three volumes in folio, reviſed and corrected by Denys Sauvage. The fifth, which copies exactly the fourth, is Paris, by Gervais Mallot, 1574, three volumes in folio *.

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* M. de St. Palaye does not ſeem to have known *all* the editions of Froiſſart. I have three of different dates to thoſe he mentions.

1. A moſt ſuperb copy on vellum, in four volumes, which originally belonged to the Sonbiſe library, purchaſed at the ſale of the Bibliotheca Pariſiana; printed in black-letter, by Guillaume Euſtace, at Paris, 1514.

2. An

There is reaſon to believe, from the manner in which Father Long expreſſes himſelf, on the ſubject of the editions of Froiſſart, that there may be others where there have been united into one body his Chronicle, with the firſt continuation, by an anonymous writer, until the year 1498, and with a ſecond continuation until the year 1513. But theſe works have never been printed together. This is not the only miſtake which this learned Librarian has made in the ſame article; as I will ſome time hence explain,

2. An edition by Denys Sauvage, in four volumes, printed by Michael Sonnius, Paris, 1574. This had belonged to Mr. Secretary Craggs.

3. An edition by Denys Sauvage, in four volumes, printed for Michael de Roigny, Paris, 1574. This had belonged to Mr. Tyrwhitt.

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when I ſpeak of theſe continuations. He alſo ſpeaks of an hiſtorical work, printed under this title: "Order of the entry "and happy arrival in the city of Paris "of Iſabella de Baviere, Queen of "France, wife of Charles VI. in the "year 1389; extracted from the fourth "book of the Hiſtory of Froiſſart;" without noticing either the date, or place of its impreſſion.

I am ignorant if this is not an old fragment of Froiſſart which Sauvage had conſulted, that had been printed before the black-letter editions, and of which I have never been able to gain any knowledge. To return to thoſe editions I have pointed out, I ſhall fix principally on that of Sauvage, and endeavour to ſhew, at the ſame time, what

what opinion ſhould be formed of the black-lettered editions which preceded his.

If the Hiſtorian has been accuſed of ſhewing too great a hatred againſt the French in ſeveral parts of his Chronicle, the Editor has been equally accuſed of ſhewing too great an inclination to them, by ſuppreſſing every thing which might diſpleaſe them. Perhaps this charge is only made in conſequence of the firſt; and readers, prejudiced on one hand that Froiſſart had been an enemy of the French, ſurprized on the other at not finding any traces of this pretended enmity in his Hiſtory, may have judged, without further reaſon, that Sauvage had retrenched, through love

to his country, all that the Hiſtorian had written through hatred to it. The French, with whom Sauvage, according to this mode of reaſoning, ought to have found favour, have not been leſs hard upon him on another head. According to ſeveral, he has altered and diſfigured the proper names; he has changed the ſimple language of the times of Froiſſart, to ſubſtitute his own; in which he has rather rendered the Hiſtory more obſcure than he has enlightened it, and has only cauſed thoſe editions which were prior to his own to become more ſcarce, and more dear. We ſhall ſee if this is the recompence that all the trouble he gave himſelf deſerved: but I ought firſt to ſpeak of the manner in

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which he laboured at this edition, and the aſſiſtance he had, according to the account which he gives himſelf.

Sauvage, having firſt tranſcribed the printed copy of Galliot du Pré, compared it with the two other black-letter editions, when he found the difference between them ſo trifling, that he thought he ought to conſider all three but as the ſame. He then collated his text with a printed fragment ſtill more antient; then with the third volume of "La Mer des "Hiſtoires," in which Froiſſart has been copied from the beginning until the 177th chapter; and laſtly, with two abridgements in MS. which he indicates, not being acquainted with the authors, by the names of "La Chaux

" and de Sala," who had communicated them to him.

The Editor, in acknowledging that theſe abridgements, or manuſcripts, were ſo much damaged, that he was frequently obliged to gueſs the meaning, have been at times very uſeful to him, gives notice that he did not follow their punctuation; but, perſuaded that one cannot be too exact in religiouſly preſerving the language of antient authors, he follows, with a ſcrupulous attention, the orthography, the antient words, and antient modes of ſpeech, although they were very different from what they were when the firſt copies came from the hands of Froiſſart. He, nevertheleſs, avows that, without derogating

gating from the reſpect due to the antient text, he has thought himſelf juſtified in making ſome changes, but ſolely, when he has been under the indiſpenſable neceſſity of ſeeking the aid of better hiſtorians, to give a meaning to paſſages which were in want of it. Even in theſe caſes, the only ones in which he has taken the liberty of making any change, he has had the precaution to place in the margin the original reading, however defective it might be; leaving, by this means, the reader the power of judging of the corrections he had made. With regard to proper names, and the names of places, he has not touched them, from the impoſſibility of correcting them with ſucceſs.

The Editor addreſſes the four volumes of Froiſſart to the Conſtable de Montmorency, by as many dedicatory epiſtles. One ſees in the firſt, and by an advertiſement to his readers, that the editions he had already given of ſeveral of our hiſtorians were but preparatory to a general hiſtory of the Gauls and of the kingdom of France, which he was then at work on.

Sauvage promiſes nothing relative to his edition of Froiſſart, which he has not faithfully performed; as one may be convinced of, by following the notes which he added. I do not ſay, that he has always well choſen from the different texts he had under his eyes; but, if the corrections he propoſes are not

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all equally juſt, there are many which offer a clear and very probable meaning of paſſages which, in the old editions, are a collection of words without connexion, and without ſenſe. With regard to the language, beſides his attention never to change any thing of the antient words, he accompanies them with an explanation whenever he thinks them not ſufficiently intelligible. His zeal in this reſpect is more praiſeworthy than his intelligence. It is ſurpriſing that, after having publiſhed ſeveral of our old authors, he was not better acquainted with their language, and that he ſhould add ſuch unnatural explanations and etymologies.

As the chronology of Froiſſart was ſometimes defective, Sauvage has re-

formed it in thoſe places which appeared to him moſt in need of it. He has often recalled to the reader's memory diſtant paſſages, in order to conciliate them, or to ſhew their contradiction; or, in ſhort, to demonſtrate the connexion of certain facts to each other; but his attempt in this part is ſcarcely worth mentioning.

Some genealogies, which regard perſons of whom Froiſſart ſpeaks, as well as ſome remarks on divers places, whoſe poſition he attempts to fix, by relating the different names they are called by, ſhew that the editor had not abſolutely neglected theſe two objects. One muſt not be ſurprized that ſo many foreign names ſhould not always be exactly correct; beſides their having been changed

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ſince then, one ſhould not impute as blame, either to the author or editor, the faults of copyiſts who have incorrectly read them, and who have written them according to the pronunciation or orthography of their language and age; for, not only are the names read in as many different ways as there are manuſcripts, but they often vary in the ſame MS. as often as they are met with. The only means to remedy this, is to clear up Froiſſart by himſelf, in collating the various paſſages where the ſame name is found; and this is what Sauvage has done; and for greater ſecurity he has read over five times the text of his author; however, when he could not draw any advantage from this repeated reading, he has made uſe of

every aſſiſtance from any quarter he could find. He appears, in fact, to have very carefully ſtudied the maps and deſcriptions of thoſe countries the Hiſtorian ſpeaks of, and alſo to have conſulted the people of thoſe countries. One obſerves, that, when he had retired to Lyons to give himſelf up more freely to ſtudy, he went to reconnoitre in that neighbourhood the field of battle of Brinay, or Brinais, in which the Duke of Bourbon had been defeated in 1360 by the free companies. The deſcription he gives of it is very inſtructive, and ſerves to clear up the circumſtances of that event. An epitaph which he had read in a church at Lyons ſerves at another time to prove the falſity of a date in Froiſſart. In ſhort, there is ſcarcely any

any Hiſtorian of importance, of whatever country he might be, whom Sauvage had not ſeen, in order the better to underſtand him on whom he was at work, and to make him better underſtood by others, and to confirm or to rectify his teſtimony. One may count nearly forty authors whom he cites in his margins, as well relative to the hiſtory of France, as to that of England, Scotland, Flanders, Germany, Spain, Italy, Hungary, and Turkey. I add, that he had conſulted the original acts, ſince he has inſerted in his annotations the ratification of the treaty of Bretigny, done by the Prince of Wales at Calais, after having tranſcribed with his hand upon a copy from the ſame Prince, collated by a "Tréſorier des Chartes."

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If, then, the edition of Sauvage is ſtill very imperfect, it has not any defects but what the preceding editions have in common with it; to which, however, it is infinitely ſuperior. The editor, well verſed in our antiquities and our hiſtory, exact and indefatigable, proves, by the conſtant uſe he makes of the two manuſcripts, by the judgement he bears of their inſufficiency, and by the regrets he utters at not being able to meet with better, that he has been in greater want of aſſiſtance, than of good will, good faith, and capacity.

In his time, manuſcripts buried in the libraries of ignorant monks, or in the archives of private perſons, and unknown to their poſſeſſors, were loſt to the learned world. Times have ſince changed;

changed; thanks to the attention of miniſters, who neglect nothing for the public good; there is ſcarce a man of letters to whom manuſcripts of all ages are not become a ſort of property. Nothing would be wanting to the good fortune of this age, if, with ſuch abundant ſuccours, there could be found men, as laborious as Sauvage, to take advantage of them; for, I have not a doubt, but that, if he had had the manuſcripts we poſſeſs, he would have given us an excellent edition of Froiſſart.

The number of thoſe known at this day is ſo conſiderable, that, after the Bible and the Fathers, I do not believe there is any work of which there have been ſo many copies; which ſhews the great eſteem it has been held in during every

every age. In the ſingle national library there are upwards of thirty volumes in folio, which contain ſeparately ſome one of the four books into which this Hiſtory is divided. The numbers 6760, 8317, 8318, 8319, 8320, 8324, 8331-2, 8332, 8334, 8335 and 36 joined together, 8334; and the numbers of the manuſcripts of Colbert, united with thoſe of the nation, 15, 85, and 231, include the firſt volume. The numbers 8321, 8330, 8333, 8337, and 8338, added together with thoſe of Colbert, 16, and 86, compoſe the ſecond volume. The numbers 8325, 8328, 8337, and 8338, added to thoſe of Colbert, 87, and 232, the third volume. The numbers 8329, 8331, 8341, 8344, added

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ed together, and that of Colbert, 17, compoſe the fourth volume.

I ſhould extend this Eſſay to too great a length if I was to deſcribe the form, the age, the titles, the omiſſions, or imperfections, and other ſingularities, which diſtinguiſh theſe manuſcripts. In regard to other and more eſſential differences, I ſhall ſay in general, that the greater part conſiſt in tranſpoſitions of ſome articles, changes, additions or retrenchments of words, of omiſſions ſometimes conſiderable; abbreviations of ſeveral chapters, or of many events; vague tranſitions, uſeleſs recapitulations of the foregoing chapters; certain phraſeology, which, like formulas, are repeated in every page; and ſome interpolations of the copyiſts, which, ſerving only to

ſwell

In number 8318, one reads in the ſame hand-writing with the manuſcript, that it was given to John Duke of Berry the 8th November, 1407, by William Boiſratier, Maſter of Requeſts, and Counſellor to this Prince. If it is the ſame which has ſince been given by M. de Chandenier to M. le Laboureur, as this laſt believed, it would be rendered the more precious from this circumſtance, that there would be found in it very conſiderable differences, that

to make Edward feel the application, one may, inſtead of Credó, read Crede, or Credito, of which Credo is perhaps an abbreviation. With regard to the ſecond, the number of ſyllables are there which an hexameter verſe requires; and that ſhould be ſufficient not to quarrel with the meaſure. ST. PALAYE.

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he ſays he has obſerved in this manuſcript, from the printed copies, and more eſpecially from that of Sauvage; or it would convince us of the falſity of this imputation, which appears to me very ſuſpicious.

But as the copy of M. le Laboureur, as he himſelf informs us, contained miniatures repreſenting the principal events of the Hiſtory, and that the one which Boiſratier preſented to the Duke of Berry does not contain any, it is certain that it cannot be the ſame. Although the miniatures, head-pieces, capital letters illuminated and emboſſed with gold, in the MS. 8319, are of great beauty; it muſt, nevertheleſs, yield in this reſpect to number 8320,

from which much may be learnt regarding warlike cuſtoms, ceremonies, dreſſes, and other points of antiquity. The Reverend Father Montfaucon has taken from them the prints of the entry of Queen Iſabella of France, and the arreſt of the King of Navarre, which he has inſerted in his "Monuments "François." Notwithſtanding this I believe, that in theſe miniatures, which are not, at the moſt, earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century, the Painter has confounded the dreſſes of his own age with thoſe of the times whoſe hiſtory he was painting.

One ſees at the beginning of ſeveral MSS. the author repreſented differently dreſſed, ſometimes as a Canon, with his

ſurplice

ſurplice and *aumuſſe* * ; ſometimes in a purple robe, preſenting his work to the King of France, or to ſome other Prince, ſeated on his throne, and crowned. The King of England is known by his robe embroidered with leopards in the number 8331-2, and the Queen of England in number 15 of Colbert's collections.

The moſt antient of all the manuſcripts of the firſt volume are the numbers 8318 and 8331-2, which appear to me to be of the end of the fourteenth century: and though many things are deficient in each of them, their antiquity ought to give them the preference. I have the ſame opinion reſpecting the

* Aumuſſe is a ſort of bracelet of fur, which Canons wear on their arms, when dreſſed. I cannot find any Engliſh word to tranſlate it.

MS. number 8333, being the moſt antient of the ſecond volume; though it does not ſeem to me to have been written earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century. The number 8321 is a continuation of number 8320; there are fewer miniatures, but they are equally beautiful; which is the only merit they have; for otherwiſe they are, properly ſpeaking, but an extract of Froiſſart, and frequently many chapters are omitted together.

Number 16, which is the ſame writing as number 15, of which it is a continuation, contains, beſides the ſecond volume, a part of the third, as far as theſe words of the 44th chapter, page 151 of the edition of Sauvage: "Thus was broken off the expedition "by ſea at this time;" to which it adds,

adds, " which coſt the kingdom of " France C. M. francs, thirty times " counted."

Number 8330 has for title, " The " third volume of the Chronicles of " Froiſſart;" although it contains but the ſecond. By a ſimilar miſtake one reads, at the end of number 8325, which concludes the third volume, " here ends " the ſecond volume of the Chronicles " of Froiſſart." This MS. which is but of the middle of the fifteenth century, is that in which the language of old times is the moſt preſerved: perhaps it has been copied from ſome other more antient and better than thoſe which remain to us. There is at the end ſome circumſtances concerning Froiſſart, which are alſo in the MSS. 8328

ſuch as had been written by a man worthy of belief, who was then in England. The manner with which this fact is related has not been forgotten by the Engliſh hiſtorians, who have mentioned the different rumours which had gone abroad on this ſubject.

Number 17 ſeems to have been written by the ſame hand as 15 and 16, and the three added to the MS. of the third book, which is wanting, made perhaps the work complete.

Under the number 169 of the Coiſlin library, at preſent in that of St. Germain-des-Prez, are comprehended four volumes, three of which are of the ſame hand-writing; that is to ſay, of the middle of the fifteenth century, containing the firſt, the third, and laſt book of

Froiſſart. The fourth, which is of the ſame writing, but more beautiful, is another copy of the laſt book, with the addition which I have juſt mentioned, concerning the death of Richard.

M. Mahudel has communicated to me a MS. of the beginning of the fifteenth century, without a title, and which may have been thought written by Froiſſart; but it is only a very ſuccinct abridgement, in which has been preſerved, as much as poſſible, the original text of the Hiſtorian until the end of the firſt volume, where the abridgement ceaſes. It is divided into ſix books, of which the two firſt end with theſe words: "Here fi-" niſhes the firſt (the ſecond) book of " this ſecond volume of the Chronicles " of England, and conſequently the ſe-" venth

" venth (the eighth) of the four vo-
" lumes *parciaulx*." One reads alſo at the end of the ſixth, " Here finiſhes " the ſecond volume of the Chronicles " of England."

This MS. probably made part of four volumes of a compilation of a Hiſtory of England, divided each into ſix books; ſuch nearly as our Chronicles of St. Denys. The firſt volume would have contained events anterior to Froiſſart; and as the ſecond, which we have, includes an abridgement of his firſt volume, one may preſume that the two following would, in like manner, have contained that of the three other volumes, and perhaps alſo the hiſtory of the times poſterior to them.

This

[illegible]

" with Scotland" in 1379, with the names of thoſe Lords, as well Scots as French, who ſigned the Treaty; and 2444, which comprehends the abridgement of the four volumes. This is preceded by a preface, wherein the abbreviator having ſaid he ſhould follow Froiſſart " chapter by chapter," adds, " and becauſe this ſame Maſter John " Froiſſart has not made an Index to " his firſt book; and by means of the " Index to a book one may, at one " glance, ſee thoſe parts which one " may be deſirous to read; I have re- " ſolved to divide this firſt book into " one hundred and twenty-ſeven chap- " ters."

We ſee nothing in theſe MSS. which either eſtabliſhes the pretended enmity of

of Froiſſart againſt the French, nor which juſtifies the accuſation brought againſt Sauvage of having altered the text of his Hiſtorian. But a magnificent MS. at Breſlaw furniſhes, according to ſome writers, an inconteſtable proof of it. The learned world, ſay they, believe they have an entire Froiſſart; it has been groſſly deceived by Sauvage, who has not preſerved the tenth part of it in his edition. One may reply to this charge; 1ſt, That Sauvage will be always exempt from reproach, ſince he has given us the text of Froiſſart, ſuch as he had ſeen it in the known copies of his time. 2dly, That the deſcription they give us of the miniatures of this MS. of Breſlaw, makes us believe that it cannot be much older than towards the

end

end of the fifteenth century; and that, conſequently, it is but of very moderate authority. In ſhort, after the agreement of ſo many other MSS. of which many even have been written in England, or deſtined for that country, ſince the author is repreſented as offering his book to the King and Queen of England, it will not be eaſy to perſuade the world that the ſingle MS. of Breſlaw contains alone ſuch very conſiderable differences. At leaſt it becomes our prudence to ſuſpend our judgement, until they ſhall have publiſhed the MS. itſelf, or ſome of thoſe paſſages which are ſaid to have been retrenched. One cannot too eagerly preſs the poſſeſſors of it to allow the publick to participate of a treaſure ſo infinitely precious to the lovers of

Hiſtory.

Hiſtory. If, hitherto, we have been in an error, we will cheerfully turn back; and there is not a man of letters poſſeſſing ſenſe, who, laying aſide all national intereſt, would not ardently deſire to have the Chronicles of Froiſſart, ſuch as they came from the hands of the author. Many MSS. of Froiſſart are to be found in the libraries of foreign countries. There is one in the library of the Cathedral of Tournay, according to the report of ſeveral Flemiſh Librarians *; three in England, according to the ca-

* M. de St. Palaye is ignorant how rich this country is in MSS. of Froiſſart. There are many magnificent ones in the Britiſh Muſeum, at Oxford, Cambridge, and in other public and private libraries. I have in my library not leſs than ſix; but not one is a complete Hiſtory.

talogue

talogue of MSS. in that kingdom; which alſo mentions ſome manuſcript notes collected by Mr. Aſhmole; and others again, which may be ſeen in the new Catalogue of MSS. by Father Montfaucon.

Beſides the antient abridgements of Froiſſart, Sleidan, full of admiration for this Hiſtorian, and anxious that the utility which may be drawn from him ſhould be common to all ages and nations, made in 1537 a Latin abridgement, which was afterwards tranſlated into French and Engliſh by P. Golin, in 4to. London, 1608.

In a preface, or epiſtle, which precedes the Latin edition, the author recommends the ſtudy of the Hiſtory of France above all others, and particularly that of Froiſſart, whoſe candour

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he praiſes, and whom he only finds fault with for being ſometimes too minute in his military details, and in his converſations with Princes. Foreign writers have accuſed Sleidan of not having compoſed this abridgement with the diſintereſtedneſs and fidelity that was to have been expected from a man of ſo great a reputation, and to have wiſhed to favour the French too much; to have paſſed over the moſt brilliant actions of the Engliſh, where he quits the ſenſe of his author, in writing otherwiſe than Froiſſart had done: this laſt reproach does not ſeem to me founded. With regard to omiſſions, he has taken that liberty which an abbreviator ought to be allowed, to attach himſelf chiefly in extracting what he thinks ſuitable for his purpoſe;

purpoſe; and that Sleidan, who at the time was living in France with Frenchmen, may, without any want of candour, have attached himſelf principally to thoſe facts which concerned them. It will not be ſo eaſy to juſtify Belleforêt, who, giving a French abridgement of Froiſſart, has contented himſelf with tranſlating literally Sleidan, without ever mentioning the author whom he tranſlated.

The Engliſh, whom the reading of Froiſſart intereſts in ſo particular a manner, have in their language a tranſlation of the Chronicles of Froiſſart, compoſed by Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners, by order of King Henry VIII. and printed towards the end of his reign. There is alſo one in Flemiſh, printed

by Guerrit Vander Loo, in folio; without counting that in the ſame tongue which Voſſius had ſeen in manuſcript.

I ſhall not ſay any thing of theſe tranſlations, not having met with either. That of Bourchier is, they ſay, more correct than the French editions, in regard to proper names *; this muſt, however, be underſtood to mean Engliſh

* I am ſorry I muſt contradict M. de St. Palaye, in his opinion of Lord Berners's tranſlation. Had it been as he imagines, I ſhould not have attempted to offer a new tranſlation to the publick: but, ſo far from being correct as to names, he mangles them nearly as bad as old Froiſſart. I cannot flatter myſelf with having ſucceeded to my own ſatisfaction, although I have taken every poſſible pains to make it as complete as the difficulties would allow me.

names.

names. The Flemiſh tranſlation muſt have the ſame advantage with regard to proper names, and names of places in Flanders. They may both be of great utility to whoever ſhould wiſh to give a good edition of Froiſſart.

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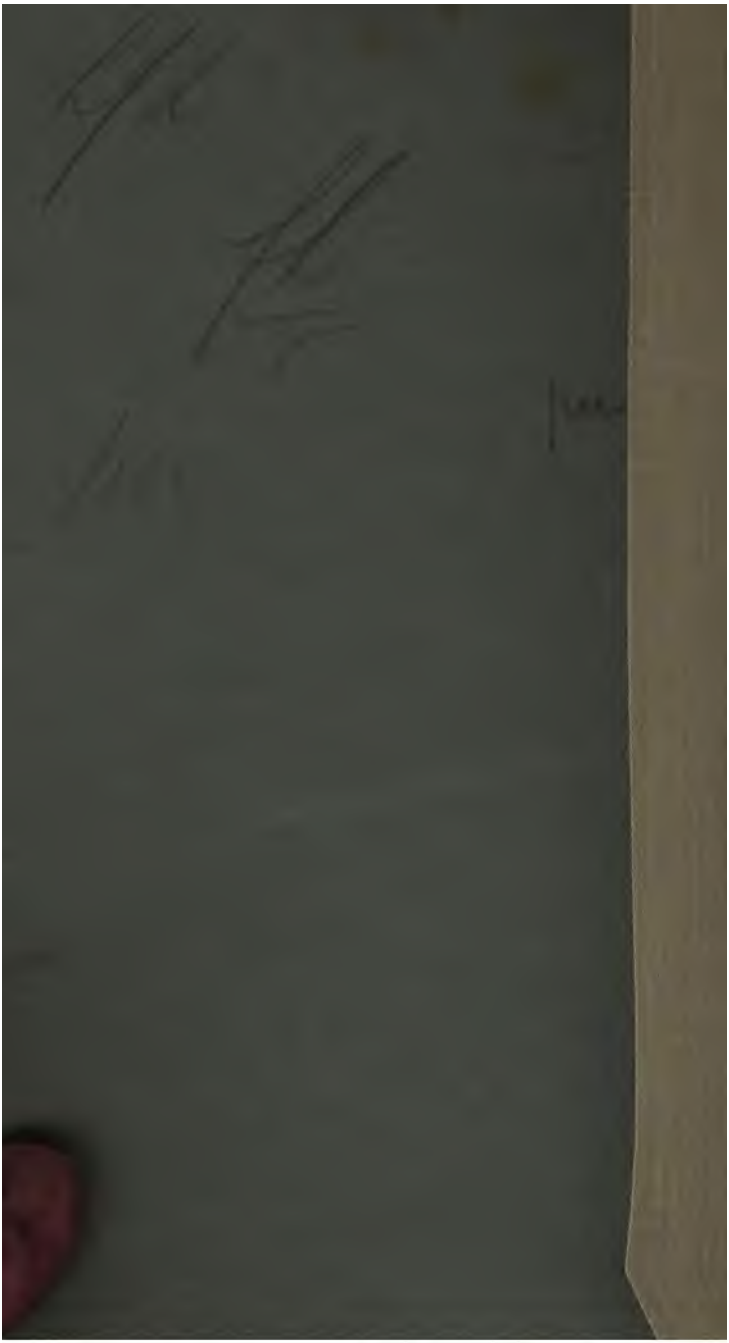

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